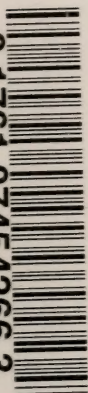


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Shakespeare

Coriolanus

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CORIO LANUS

[3]

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAIUS MARCIUS, afterwards CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS.

TITUS LARTIUS, }  
COMINIUS, } generals against the Volscians.

MENENIUS AGRIPPA, friend to Coriolanus.

SICINIUS VELUTUS, }  
JUNIUS BRUTUS, } tribunes of the people.

Young MARCIUS, son to Coriolanus.

A Roman Herald.

TULLUS AUFIDIUS, general of the Volscians.

Lieutenant to Aufidius.

Conspirators with Aufidius.

A Citizen of Antium.

Two Volscian Guards.

VOLUMNIA, mother to Coriolanus.

VIRGILIA, wife to Coriolanus.

VALERIA, friend to Virgilia.

Gentlewoman, attending on Virgilia.

Roman and Volscian Senators, Patricians, Ædiles, Lictors,  
Soldiers, Citizens, Messengers, Servants to Aufidius, and  
other Attendants.

SCENE: *Rome and the neighbourhood; Corioli and the  
neighbourhood; Antium.*

PR  
2805  
A2D4

# CORIOLANUS.

## ACT I.

### SCENE I. *Rome. A street.*

*Enter a company of mutinous Citizens, with staves, clubs, and other weapons.*

*First Cit.* Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

*All.* Speak, speak.

*First Cit.* You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?

*All.* Resolved, resolved.

*First Cit.* First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

*All.* We know 't, we know 't.

*First Cit.* Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict?

*All.* No more talking on 't; let it be done: away, away!

*Sec. Cit.* One word, good citizens.

11

*First Cit.* We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good. What authority surfeits on would relieve us: if they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear: the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes: for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.

20



*Sec. Cit.* Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

*All.* Against him first: he's a very dog to the commonalty.

*Sec. Cit.* Consider you what services he has done for his country?

*First Cit.* Very well; and could be content to give him good report for't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

*Sec. Cit.* Nay, but speak not maliciously. 28

*First Cit.* I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end: though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his mother, and to be partly proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

*Sec. Cit.* What he cannot help in his nature, you account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is covetous.

*First Cit.* If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations; he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. [*Shouts within.*] What shouts are these? The other side o' the city is risen: why stay we prating here? to the Capitol!

*All.* Come, come. 40

*First Cit.* Soft! who comes here?

*Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA.*

*Sec. Cit.* Worthy Menenius Agrippa; one that hath always loved the people.

*First Cit.* He's one honest enough: would all the rest were so!

*Men.* What work's, my countrymen, in hand? where go you With bats and clubs? The matter? speak, I pray you.

*First Cit.* Our business is not unknown to the senate; they have had inkling this fortnight what we intend to do, which now we'll show 'em in deeds. They say poor suitors have strong breaths: they shall know we have strong arms too. 52

*Men.* Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours,

Will you undo yourselves ?

*First Cit.* We cannot, sir, we are undone already.

*Men.* I tell you, friends, most charitable care  
Have the patricians of you. For your wants,  
Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well  
Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them  
Against the Roman state, whose course will on 60  
The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs  
Of more strong link asunder than can ever  
Appear in your impediment. For the dearth,  
The gods, not the patricians, make it, and  
Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack,  
You are transported by calamity  
Thither where more attends you, and you slander  
The helms o' the state, who care for you like fathers,  
When you curse them as enemies. 69

*First Cit.* Care for us ! True, indeed ! They ne'er cared  
for us yet : suffer us to famish, and their store-houses  
crammed with grain ; make edicts for usury, to support  
usurers ; repeal daily any wholesome act established against  
the rich, and provide more piercing statutes daily, to chain  
up and restrain the poor. If the wars eat us not up, they  
will ; and there's all the love they bear us.

*Men.* Either you must  
Confess yourselves wondrous malicious,  
Or be accused of folly. I shall tell you  
A pretty tale : it may be you have heard it ; 80  
But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture  
To stale't a little more.

*First Cit.* Well, I'll hear it, sir : yet you must not think  
to fob off our disgrace with a tale : but, an't please you,  
deliver.

*Men.* There was a time when all the body's members  
Rebell'd against the belly ; thus accused it :  
That only like a gulf it did remain  
I' the midst o' the body, idle and unactive,



Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing 90  
 Like labour with the rest, where the other instruments  
 Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,  
 And, mutually participate, did minister  
 Unto the appetite and affection common  
 Of the whole body. The belly answer'd—

*First Cit.* Well, sir, what answer made the belly?

*Men.* Sir, I shall tell you. With a kind of smile,  
 Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus—  
 For, look you, I may make the belly smile  
 As well as speak—it tauntingly replied 100  
 To the discontented members, the mutinous parts  
 That envied his receipt; even so most fitly  
 As you malign our senators for that  
 They are not such as you.

*First Cit.* Your belly's answer? What!  
 The kingly-crowned head, the vigilant eye,  
 The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,  
 Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,  
 With other muniments and petty helps  
 In this our fabric, if that they—

*Men.* What then?  
 'Fore me, this fellow speaks! What then? what then? 110

*First Cit.* Should by the cormorant belly be restrain'd,  
 Who is the sink o' the body,—

*Men.* Well, what then?

*First Cit.* The former agents, if they did complain,  
 What could the belly answer?

*Men.* I will tell you;  
 If you'll bestow a small—of what you have little—  
 Patience awhile, you'll hear the belly's answer.

*First Cit.* Ye're long about it.

*Men.* Note me this, good friend;  
 Your most grave belly was deliberate,  
 Not rash like his accusers, and thus answer'd:  
 'True is it, my incorporate friends,' quoth he, 120



‘That I receive the general food at first,  
Which you do live upon ; and fit it is,  
Because I am the store-house and the shop  
Of the whole body : but, if you do remember,  
I send it through the rivers of your blood,  
Even to the court, the heart, to the seat o’ the brain ;  
And, through the cranks and offices of man,  
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins  
From me receive that natural competency  
Whereby they live : and though that all at once, 130  
You, my good friends,’—this says the belly, mark me,—  
*First Cit.* Ay, sir ; well, well.

*Men.* ‘Though all at once cannot  
See what I do deliver out to each,  
Yet I can make my audit up, that all  
From me do back receive the flour of all,  
And leave me but the bran.’ What say you to’t ?

*First Cit.* It was an answer : how apply you this ?

*Men.* The senators of Rome are this good belly,  
And you the mutinous members ; for examine  
Their counsels and their cares, digest things rightly 140  
Touching the weal o’ the common, you shall find  
No public benefit which you receive  
But it proceeds or comes from them to you  
And no way from yourselves. What do you think,  
You, the great toe of this assembly ?

*First Cit.* I the great toe ! why the great toe ?

*Men.* For that, being one o’ the lowest, basest, poorest,  
Of this most wise rebellion, thou go’st foremost :  
Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,  
Lead’st first to win some vantage. 150  
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs :  
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle ;  
The one side must have bale.

*Enter CAIUS MARCIUS.*

Hail, noble Marcius !

*Mar.* Thanks. What's the matter, you dissentious rogue.  
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,  
Make yourselves scabs ?

*First Cit.* We have ever your good word.

*Mar.* He that will give good words to thee will flatter  
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,  
That like nor peace nor war ? the one affrights you,  
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you, 160  
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares ;  
Where foxes, geese : you are no surer, no,  
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,  
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is  
To make him worthy whose offence subdues him  
And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness  
Deserves your hate ; and your affections are  
A sick man's appetite, who desires most that  
Which would increase his evil. He that depends  
Upon your favours swims with fins of lead 170  
And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye ! Trust ye ?  
With every minute you do change a mind,  
And call him noble that was now your hate,  
Him vile that was your garland. What's the matter,  
That in these several places of the city  
You cry against the noble senate, who,  
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else  
Would feed on one another ? What's their seeking ?

*Men.* For corn at their own rates ; whereof, they say,  
The city is well stored.

*Mar.* Hang 'em ! They say ! 180  
They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know  
What's done i' the Capitol ; who's like to rise,  
Who thrives and who declines ; side-factions and give out  
Conjectural marriages ; making parties strong

And feebling such as stand not in their liking  
Below their cobbled shoes. They say there's grain enough !  
Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,  
And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry  
With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high  
As I could pick my lance. 190

*Men.* Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded ;  
For though abundantly they lack discretion,  
Yet are they passing cowardly. But, I beseech you,  
What says the other troop ?

*Mar.* They are dissolved : hang 'em !  
They said they were an-hungry ; sigh'd forth proverbs,  
That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must eat,  
That meat was made for mouths, that the gods sent not  
Corn for the rich men only : with these shreds  
They vented their complainings ; which being answer'd,  
And a petition granted them, a strange one— 200  
To break the heart of generosity,  
And make bold power look pale—they threw their caps  
As they would hang them on the horns o' the moon,  
Shouting their emulation.

*Men.* What is granted them ?

*Mar.* Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,  
Of their own choice : one's Junius Brutus,  
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not—'Sdeath !  
The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,  
Ere so prevail'd with me : it will in time  
Win upon power and throw forth greater themes 210  
For insurrection's arguing.

*Men.* This is strange.

*Mar.* Go, get you home, you fragments !

*Enter a Messenger, hastily.*

*Mess.* Where's Caius Marcius ?

*Mar.* Here : what's the matter ?

*Mess.* The news is, sir, the Volsces are in arms.



*Mar.* I am glad on 't : then we shall ha' means to vent  
Our musty superfluity. See, our best elders.

*Enter COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, and other Senators ; JUNIUS  
BRUTUS and SICINIUS VELUTUS.*

*First Sen.* Marcius, 'tis true that you have lately told us ;  
The Volsces are in arms.

*Mar.* They have a leader,  
Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to 't.  
I sin in envying his nobility, 220  
And were I any thing but what I am,  
I would wish me only he.

*Com.* You have fought together.

*Mar.* Were half to half the world by the ears and he  
Upon my party, I 'ld revolt, to make  
Only my wars with him : he is a lion  
That I am proud to hunt.

*First Sen.* Then, worthy Marcius,  
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

*Com.* It is your former promise.

*Mar.* Sir, it is ;  
And I am constant. Titus Lartius, thou  
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face. 230  
What, art thou stiff ? stand'st out ?

*Tit.* No, Caius Marcius ;  
I'll lean upon one crutch and fight with t' other,  
Ere stay behind this business.

*Men.* O, true-bred !

*First Sen.* Your company to the Capitol ; where, I know,  
Our greatest friends attend us.

*Tit.* [To *Com.*] Lead you on.  
[To *Mar.*] Follow Cominius ; we must follow you ;  
Right worthy you priority.

*Com.* Noble Marcius !

*First Sen.* [To the Citizens.] Hence to your homes ; be  
gone !

*Mar.* Nay, let them follow :  
The Volsces have much corn ; take these rats thither  
To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutiners, 240  
Your valour puts well forth : pray, follow.

[*Citizens steal away: Exeunt all but Sicinius and Brutus.*

*Sic.* Was ever man so proud as is this Marcius ?

*Bru.* He has no equal.

*Sic.* When we were chosen tribunes for the people,—

*Bru.* Mark'd you his lip and eyes ?

*Sic.* Nay, but his taunts.

*Bru.* Being moved, he will not spare to gird the gods.

*Sic.* Be-mock the modest moon.

*Bru.* The present wars devour him ! he is grown  
Too proud to be so valiant.

*Sic.* Such a nature,  
Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow 250  
Which he treads on at noon : but I do wonder  
His insolence can brook to be commanded  
Under Cominius.

*Bru.* Fame, at the which he aims,  
In whom already he's well graced, can not  
Better be held nor more attain'd than by  
A place below the first : for what miscarries  
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform  
To the utmost of a man, and giddy censure  
Will then cry out of Marcius 'O, if he  
Had borne the business !'

*Sic.* Besides, if things go well, 260  
Opinion that so sticks on Marcius shall  
Of his demerits rob Cominius.

*Bru.* Come :  
Half all Cominius' honours are to Marcius,  
Though Marcius earn'd them not, and all his faults  
To Marcius shall be honours, though indeed  
In aught he merit not.

*Sic.* Let's hence, and hear  
How the dispatch is made, and in what fashion,  
More than his singularity, he goes  
Upon this present action.

*Bru.* Let's along. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Corioli. The Senate-house.*

*Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS and certain Senators.*

*First Sen.* So, your opinion is, Aufidius,  
That they of Rome are enter'd in our counsels  
And know how we proceed.

*Auf.* Is it not yours?  
What ever have been thought on in this state,  
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome  
Had circumvention? 'Tis not four days gone  
Since I heard thence; these are the words: I think  
I have the letter here; yes, here it is.  
[*Reads*] 'They have press'd a power, but it is not known  
Whether for east or west: the dearth is great; 10  
The people mutinous; and it is rumour'd,  
Cominius, Marcius your old enemy,  
Who is of Rome worse hated than of you,  
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,  
These three lead on this preparation  
Whither 'tis bent: most likely 'tis for you:  
Consider of it.'

*First Sen.* Our army's in the field:  
We never yet made doubt but Rome was ready  
To answer us.

*Auf.* Nor did you think it folly 20  
To keep your great pretences veil'd till when  
They needs must show themselves; which in the hatching,  
It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery  
We shall be shorten'd in our aim, which was  
To take in many towns ere almost Rome



Should know we were afoot.

*Sec. Sen.* Noble Aufidius,  
Take your commission ; hie you to your bands :  
Let us alone to guard Corioli :  
If they set down before's, for the remove  
Bring up your army ; but, I think, you'll find  
They've not prepared for us.

*Auf.* O, doubt not that ; 30  
I speak from certainties. Nay, more,  
Some parcels of their power are forth already,  
And only hitherward. I leave your honours.  
If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,  
'Tis sworn between us we shall ever strike  
Till one can do no more.

*All.* The gods assist you !

*Auf.* And keep your honours safe !

*First Sen.* Farewell !

*Sec. Sen.* Farewell !

*All.* Farewell. [Exeunt.

SCENE III. *Rome. A room in Marcius' house.*

*Enter VOLUMNIA and VIRGILIA : they set them down on two low stools, and sew.*

*Vol.* I pray you, daughter, sing ; or express yourself in a more comfortable sort : if my son were my husband, I should freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he won honour than in the embracements of his bed where he would show most love. When yet he was but tender-bodied and the only son of my womb, when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze his way, when for an hour of kings' entreaties a mother should not sell him a day from her beholding, I—considering how honour would become such a person ; that it was no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir—was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to

find fame. To a cruel war I sent him ; from whence he returned, his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man.

*Vir.* But had he died in the business, madam ; how then ?

*Vol.* Then his good report should have been my son ; I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely : had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

22

*Enter a Gentlewoman.*

*Gent.* Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

*Vir.* Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.

*Vol.* Indeed, you shall not.

Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum,  
See him pluck Aufidius down by the hair,  
As children from a bear, the Volsces shunning him :  
Methinks I see him stamp thus, and call thus :  
'Come on, you cowards ! you were got in fear,  
Though you were born in Rome : ' his bloody brow  
With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,  
Like to a harvest-man that's task'd to mow  
Or all or lose his hire.

30

*Vir.* His bloody brow ! O Jupiter, no blood !

*Vol.* Away, you fool ! it more becomes a man  
Than gilt his trophy : the breasts of Hecuba,  
When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier  
Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood  
At Grecian sword, contemning. Tell Valeria,  
We are fit to bid her welcome.

40

[*Exit Gent.*

*Vir.* Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius !

*Vol.* He'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee  
And tread upon his neck.

*Enter VALERIA, with an Usher and Gentlewoman.*

*Val.* My ladies both, good day to you.

*Vol.* Sweet madam.

*Vir.* I am glad to see your ladyship.

*Val.* How do you both? you are manifest housekeepers. What are you sewing here? A fine spot, in good faith.

*How does your little son?* 50

*Vir.* I thank your ladyship; well, good madam.

*Vol.* He had rather see the swords, and hear a drum, than look upon his schoolmaster.

*Val.* O' my word, the father's son: I'll swear, 'tis a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I looked upon him o' Wednesday half an hour together: has such a confirmed countenance. I saw him run after a gilded butterfly; and when he caught it, he let it go again; and after it again; and over and over he comes, and up again; caught it again; or whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth and tear it; O, I warrant, how he mammocked it! 61

*Vol.* One on's father's moods.

*Val.* Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

*Vir.* A crack, madam.

*Val.* Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.

*Vir.* No, good madam; I will not out of doors.

*Val.* Not out of doors!

*Vol.* She shall, she shall.

*Vir.* Indeed, no, by your patience; I'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars. 71

*Val.* Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably: come, you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

*Vir.* I will wish her speedy strength, and visit her with my prayers; but I cannot go thither.

*Vol.* Why, I pray you?

*Vir.* 'Tis not to save labour, nor that I want love.

*Val.* You would be another Penelope: yet, they say, all



the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come ; I would your cambric were sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us. 82

*Vir.* No, good madam, pardon me ; indeed, I will not forth.

*Val.* In truth, la, go with me ; and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband.

*Vir.* O, good madam, there can be none yet.

*Val.* Verily, I do not jest with you ; there came news from him last night.

*Vir.* Indeed, madam ? 90

*Val.* In earnest, it's true ; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is : the Volsces have an army forth ; against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power : your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioli ; they nothing doubt prevailing and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honour ; and so, I pray, go with us.

*Vir.* Give me excuse, good madam ; I will obey you in every thing hereafter.

*Vol.* Let her alone, lady : as she is now, she will but dis-ease our better mirth. 101

*Val.* In troth, I think she would. Fare you well, then. Come, good sweet lady. Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemnness out o' door, and go along with us.

*Vir.* No, at a word, madam ; indeed, I must not. I wish you much mirth.

*Val.* Well, then, farewell. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV. *Before Corioli.*

*Enter, with drum and colours, MARCIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Captains and Soldiers. To them a Messenger.*

*Mar.* Yonder comes news. A wager they have met.

*Lart.* My horse to yours, no.

*Mar.* 'Tis done.

*Lart.* Agreed.

*Mar.* Say, has our general met the enemy?

*Mess.* They lie in view; but have not spoke as yet.

*Lart.* So, the good horse is mine.

*Mar.* I'll buy him of you.

*Lart.* No, I'll nor sell nor give him: lend you him I will  
For half a hundred years. Summon the town.

*Mar.* How far off lie these armies?

*Mess.* Within this mile and half.

*Mar.* Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours.  
Now, ~~Mars~~, I prithee, make us quick in work 10  
That we with smoking swords may march from hence,  
To help our fielded friends! Come, blow thy blast.

*They sound a parley. Enter two Senators with others  
on the walls.*

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

*First Sen.* No, nor a man that fears you less than he,  
That's lesser than a little. [*Drums afar off.*] Hark! our  
drums

Are bringing forth our youth. We'll break our walls,  
Rather than they shall pound us up: our gates,  
Which yet seem shut, we have but pinn'd with rushes;  
They'll open of themselves. [*Alarum afar off.*] Hark you,  
far off!

There is Aufidius; list, what work he makes 20  
Amongst your cloven army.

*Mar.* O, they are at it!

*Lart.* Their noise be our instruction. Ladders, ho!

*Enter the army of the Volsces.*

*Mar.* They fear us not, but issue forth their city.  
Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight  
With hearts more proof than shields. Advance, brave Titus:  
They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts, ★

Which makes me sweat with wrath. Come on, my fellows :  
 He that retires, I'll take him for a Volsee,  
 And he shall feel mine edge.

*Alarum. The Romans are beat back to their trenches.*  
*Re-enter MARCIUS, cursing.*

*Mar.* All the contagion of the south light on you, 30  
 You shames of Rome ! you herd of—Boils and plagues  
 Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorr'd  
 Further than seen and one infect another  
 Against the wind a mile ! You souls of geese,  
 That bear the shapes of men, how have you run  
 From slaves that apes would beat ! Pluto and hell !  
 All hurt behind ; backs red, and faces pale  
 With flight and agued fear ! Mend and charge home,  
 Or, by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe  
 And make my wars on you : look to't : come on ; 40  
 If you'll stand fast, we'll beat them to their wives,  
 As they us to our trenches followed.

*Another alarum. The Volscs fly, and MARCIUS follows*  
*them to the gates.*

So, now the gates are ope : now prove good seconds :  
 'Tis for the followers fortune widens them,  
 Not for the fliers : mark me, and do the like. [*Enters the gates.*]

*First Sol.* Fool-hardiness ; not I.

*Sec. Sol.* Nor I. [*Marcus is shut in.*]

*First Sol.* See, they have shut him in.

*All.* To the pot, I warrant him.  
*[Alarum continues.]*

*Re-enter TITUS LARTIUS.*

*Lart.* What is become of Marcus ?

*All.* Slain, sir, doubtless.

*First Sol.* Following the fliers at the very heels,  
 With them he enters ; who, upon the sudden, 50



Clapp'd to their gates : he is himself alone,  
To answer all the city.

*Lart.* O noble fellow !  
Who sensibly outdares his senseless sword,  
And, when it bows, stands up. Thou art left, Marcius :  
A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,  
Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier  
Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible  
Only in strokes ; but, with thy grim looks and  
The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,  
Thou madest thine enemies shake, as if the world  
Were feverous and did tremble.

60

*Re-enter MARCIUS, bleeding, assaulted by the enemy.*

*First Sol.* Look, sir.

*Lart.* O, 'tis Marcius !  
Let's fetch him off, or make remain alike.

*[They fight, and all enter the city.]*

SCENE V. *Corioli. A street.*

*Enter certain Romans, with spoils.*

*First Rom.* This will I carry to Rome.

*Sec. Rom.* And I this.

*Third Rom.* A murrain on 't ! I took this for silver.

*[Alarum continues still afar off.]*

*Enter MARCIUS and TITUS LARTIUS with a trumpet.*

*Mar.* See here these movers that do prize their hours  
At a crack'd drachma ! Cushions, leaden spoons,  
Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would  
Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,  
Ere yet the fight be done, pack up : down with them !  
And hark, what noise the general makes ! To him !  
There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,  
Piercing our Romans : then, valiant Titus, take

10

Convenient numbers to make good the city ;  
Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste  
To help Cominius.

*Lart.*                      Worthy sir, thou bleed'st ;  
Thy exercise hath been too violent  
For a second course of fight.

*Mar.*                      Sir, praise me not ;  
My work hath yet not warm'd me : fare you well :  
The blood I drop is rather physical  
Than dangerous to me : to Aufidius thus  
I will appear, and fight.

*Lart.*                      Now the fair goddess, Fortune,      20  
Fall deep in love with thee ; and her great charms  
Misguide thy opposers' swords ! Bold gentleman,  
Prosperity be thy page !

*Mar.*                      Thy friend no less  
Than those she placeth highest ! So, farewell.

*Lart.* Thou worthiest Marcius !                      [*Exit Marcius.*]  
Go sound thy trumpet in the market-place ;  
Call thither all the officers o' the town,  
Where they shall know our mind : away !                      [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Near the camp of Cominius.*

*Enter COMINIUS, as it were in retire, with soldiers.*

*Com.* Breathe you, my friends : well fought ; we are  
come off  
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,  
Nor cowardly in retire : believe me, sirs,  
We shall be charged again. Whiles we have struck,  
By interims and conveying gusts we have heard  
The charges of our friends. Ye Roman gods !  
Lead their successes as we wish our own,  
That both our powers, with smiling fronts encountering,  
May give you thankful sacrifice.

*Enter a Messenger.*

Thy news?

*Mess.* The citizens of Corioli have issued, 10  
And given to Lartius and to Marcius battle :  
I saw our party to their trenches driven,  
And then I came away.

*Com.* Though thou speak'st truth,  
Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is't since ?

*Mess.* Above an hour, my lord.

*Com.* 'Tis not a mile ; briefly we heard their drums :  
How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour,  
And bring thy news so late ?

*Mess.* Spies of the Volsces  
Held me in chase, that I was forced to wheel  
Three or four miles about, else had I, sir, 20  
Half an hour since brought my report.

*Com.* Who's yonder,  
That does appear as he were flay'd ? O gods !  
He has the stamp of Marcius ; and I have  
Before-time seen him thus.

*Mar.* [Within] Come I too late ?

*Com.* The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabor  
More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue  
From every meaner man.

*Enter MARCIUS.*

*Mar.* Come I too late ?

*Com.* Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,  
But mantled in your own.

*Mar.* O, let me clip ye  
In arms as sound as when I woo'd, in heart 30  
As merry as when our nuptial day was done,  
And tapers burned to bedward !

*Com.* Flower of warriors,  
How is't with Titus Lartius ?



*Mar.* As with a man busied about decrees :  
Condemning some to death, and some to exile ;  
Ransoming him, or pitying, threatening the other ;  
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,  
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,  
To let him slip at will.

*Com.* Where is that slave  
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches ? 40  
Where is he ? call him hither.

*Mar.* Let him alone ;  
He did inform the truth : but for our gentlemen,  
The common file—a plague ! tribunes for them !—  
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat as they did budge  
From rascals worse than they.

*Com.* But how prevail'd you ?

*Mar.* Will the time serve to tell ? I do not think.  
Where is the enemy ? are you lords o' the field ?  
If not, why cease you till you are so ?

*Com.* Marcius,  
We have at disadvantage fought and did  
Retire to win our purpose. 50

*Mar.* How lies their battle ? know you on which side  
They have placed their men of trust ?

*Com.* As I guess, Marcius,  
Their bands i' the vaward are the Antiates,  
Of their best trust ; o'er them Aufidius,  
Their very heart of hope.

*Mar.* I do beseech you,  
By all the battles wherein we have fought,  
By the blood we have shed together, by the vows  
We have made to endure friends, that you directly  
Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates ;  
And that you not delay the present, but, 60  
Filling the air with swords advanced and darts,  
We prove this very hour.

*Com.* Though I could wish

You were conducted to a gentle bath  
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never  
Deny your asking : take your choice of those  
That best can aid your action.

*Mar.* Those are they  
That most are willing. If any such be here—  
As it were sin to doubt—that love this painting  
Wherein you see me smear'd ; if any fear  
Lesser his person than an ill report ; 70  
If any think brave death outweighs bad life,  
And that his country's dearer than himself ;  
Let him alone, or so many so minded,  
Wave thus, to express his disposition,  
And follow Marcius.

*[They all shout and wave their swords, take him  
up in their arms, and cast up their caps.]*

Of me alone make you a sword ? of me ?  
If these shows be not outward, which of you  
But is four Volscres ? none of you but is  
Able to bear against the great Aufidius  
A shield as hard as his. A certain number, 80  
Though thanks to all, must I select from all : the rest  
Shall bear the business in some other fight,  
As cause will be obey'd. Please you to march ;  
And four shall quickly draw out my command,  
Which men are best inclined.

*Com.* March on, my fellows :  
Make good this ostentation, and you shall  
Divide in all with us. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VII. *The gates of Corioli.*

TITUS LARTIUS, *having set a guard upon Corioli, going with  
drum and trumpet toward COMINIUS and CAIUS MARCIUS,  
enters with a Lieutenant, other Soldiers, and a Scout.*

*Lart.* So, let the ports be guarded : keep your duties,

As I have set them down. If I do send, dispatch  
Those centuries to our aid : the rest will serve  
For a short holding : if we lose the field,  
We cannot keep the town.

*Lieu.* Fear not our care, sir.

*Lart.* Hence, and shut your gates upon 's.  
Our guider, come ; to the Roman camp conduct us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII. *A field of battle.*

*Alarum as in battle. Enter, from opposite sides, MARCIUS  
and AUFIDIUS.*

*Mar.* I'll fight with none but thee ; for I do hate thee  
Worse than a promise-breaker.

*Auf.* We hate alike :  
Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor  
More than thy fame I envy. Fix thy foot.

*Mar.* Let the first budger die the other's slave,  
And the gods doom him after !

*Auf.* If I fly, Marcius,  
Holloa me like a hare.

*Mar.* Within these three hours, Tullus,  
Alone I fought on your Corioli walls,  
And made what work I pleased : 'tis not my blood  
Wherein thou seest me mask'd ; for thy revenge  
Wrench up thy power to the highest. 10

*Auf.* Wert thou the Hector  
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,  
Thou should'st not scape me here.

[*They fight, and certain Volsces come in the aid of Aufidius.*

*Marcus fights till they be driven in breathless.*

Officious, and not valiant, you have shamed me  
In your condemned seconds. [*Exeunt.*



SCENE IX. *The Roman Camp.*

*Flourish. Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Flourish. Enter, from one side, COMINIUS with the Romans ; from the other side, MARCIUS, with his arm in a scarf.*

*Com.* If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,  
Thou 'ldst not believe thy deeds : but I'll report it  
Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles,  
Where great patricians shall attend and shrug,  
I' the end admire, where ladies shall be frighted,  
And, gladly quaked, hear more ; where the dull tribunes,  
That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honours,  
Shall say against their hearts ' We thank the gods  
Our Rome hath such a soldier.'  
Yet camest thou to a morsel of this feast, 10  
Having fully dined before.

*Enter TITUS LARTIUS, with his power, from the pursuit.*

*Lart.* O general,  
Here is the steed, we the caparison :  
Hadst thou beheld—

*Mar.* Pray now, no more : my mother,  
Who has a charter to extol her blood,  
When she does praise me grieves me. I have done  
As you have done ; that's what I can ; induced  
As you have been ; that's for my country :  
He that has but effected his good will  
Hath overta'en mine act.

*Com.* You shall not be  
The grave of your deserving ; Rome must know 20  
The value of her own : 'twere a concealment  
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,  
To hide your doings ; and to silence that,  
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,  
Would seem but modest : therefore, I beseech you—

In sign of what you are, not to reward  
What you have done—before our army hear me.

*Mar.* I have some wounds upon me, and they smart  
To hear themselves remember'd.

*Com.* Should they not,  
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude, 30  
And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses,  
Whereof we have ta'en good and good store, of all  
The treasure in this field achieved and city,  
We render you the tenth, to be ta'en forth,  
Before the common distribution, at  
Your only choice.

*Mar.* I thank you, general ;  
But cannot make my heart consent to take  
A bribe to pay my sword : I do refuse it ;  
And stand upon my common part with those  
That have beheld the doing. 40

[*A long flourish. They all cry ' Marcius ! Marcius ! ' cast  
up their caps and lances : Cominius and Lartius stand  
bare.*]

*Mar.* May these same instruments, which you profane,  
Never sound more ! when drums and trumpets shall  
I' the field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be  
Made all of false-faced soothing !  
When steel grows soft as is the parasite's silk,  
Let him be made an armature for the wars !  
No more, I say ! For that I have not wash'd  
My nose that bled, or foil'd some debile wretch,—  
Which, without note, here's many else have done,—  
You shout me forth 50  
In acclamations hyperbolical ;  
As if I loved my little should be dieted  
In praises sauced with lies.

*Com.* Too modest are you ;  
More cruel to your good report than grateful

To us that give you truly : by your patience,  
If 'gainst yourself you be incensed, we'll put you,  
Like one that means his proper harm, in manacles,  
Then reason safely with you. Therefore, be it known,  
As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius  
Wears this war's garland : in token of the which, 60  
My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,  
With all his trim belonging ; and from this time,  
For what he did before Corioli, call him,  
With all the applause and clamour of the host,  
CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS ! Bear  
The addition nobly ever !

[*Flourish. Trumpets sound, and drums.*]

*All.* Caius Marcius Coriolanus !

*Cor.* I will go wash ;  
And when my face is fair, you shall perceive  
Whether I blush or no : howbeit, I thank you. 70  
I mean to stride your steed, and at all times  
To undercrest your good addition  
To the fairness of my power.

*Com.* So, to our tent ;  
Where, ere we do repose us, we will write  
To Rome of our success. You, Titus Lartius,  
Must to Corioli back : send us to Rome  
The best, with whom we may articulate,  
For their own good and ours.

*Lart.* I shall, my lord.

*Cor.* The gods begin to mock me. I, that now  
Refused most princely gifts, am bound to beg 80  
Of my lord general.

*Com.* Take't ; 'tis yours. What is't ?

*Cor.* I sometime lay here in Corioli  
At a poor man's house ; he used me kindly :  
He cried to me ; I saw him prisoner ;  
But then Aufidius was within my view,  
And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity : I request you



To give my poor host freedom.

*Com.*

O, well begg'd !

Were he the butcher of my son, he should  
Be free as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus.

*Lart.* Marcius, his name ?

*Cor.*

By Jupiter ! forgot.

— 90

I am weary ; yea, my memory is tired.

Have we no wine here ?

*Com.*

Go we to our tent :

The blood upon your visage dries ; 'tis time

It should be look'd to : come.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE X. *The camp of the Volsces.*

*A flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, bloody, with  
two or three Soldiers.*

*Auf.* The town is ta'en !

*First Sol.* 'Twill be deliver'd back on good condition.

*Auf.* Condition !

I would I were a Roman ; for I cannot,

Being a Volsce, be that I am. Condition !

What good condition can a treaty find

I' the part that is at mercy ? Five times, Marcius,

I have fought with thee : so often hast thou beat me,

And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter

As often as we eat. By the elements,

10

If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,

He's mine, or I am his : mine emulation

Hath not that honour in't it had ; for where

I thought to crush him in an equal force,

True sword to sword, I'll potch at him some way

Or wrath or craft may get him.

*First Sol.*

He's the devil.

*Auf.* Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour's poison'd  
With only suffering stain by him ; for him .

Shall fly out of itself : nor sleep nor sanctuary,  
Being naked, sick, nor fane nor Capitol, 20  
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,  
Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up  
Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst  
My hate to Marcius : where I find him, were it  
At home, upon my brother's guard, even there,  
Against the hospitable canon, would I  
Wash my fierce hand in 's heart. Go you to the city ;  
Learn how 'tis held ; and what they are that must  
Be hostages for Rome.

*First Sol.* Will not you go ?

*Auf.* I am attended at the cypress grove : I pray you— 30  
'Tis south the city mills—bring me word thither  
How the world goes, that to the pace of it  
I may spur on my journey.

*First Sol.* I shall, sir. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II.

### SCENE I. *Rome. A public place.*

*Enter MENENIUS with the two Tribunes of the people, SICINIUS  
and BRUTUS.*

*Men.* The augurer tells me we shall have news to-night.

*Bru.* Good or bad ?

*Men.* Not according to the prayer of the people, for they  
love not Marcius.

*Sic.* Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

*Men.* Pray you, who does the wolf love ?

*Sic.* The lamb.

*Men.* Ay, to devour him ; as the hungry plebeians would  
the noble Marcius.

*Bru.* He's a lamb indeed, that baes like a bear. 10

*Men.* He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb. You two  
are old men : tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

*Both.* Well, sir.

*Men.* In what enormity is Marcius poor in, that you two have not in abundance?

*Bru.* He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all.

*Sic.* Especially in pride.

*Bru.* And topping all others in boasting.

*Men.* This is strange now : do you two know how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' the right-hand file? do you? 21

*Both.* Why, how are we censured?

*Men.* Because you talk of pride now,—will you not be angry?

*Both.* Well, well, sir, well.

*Men.* Why, 'tis no great matter ; for a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience : give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures ; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud? 30

*Bru.* We do it not alone, sir.

*Men.* I know you can do very little alone ; for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single : your abilities are too infant-like for doing much alone. You talk of pride : O that you could turn your eyes toward the napes of your necks, and make but an interior survey of your good selves ! O that you could !

*Bru.* What then, sir?

*Men.* Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, alias fools, as any in Rome. 41

*Sic.* Menenius, you are known well enough too.

*Men.* I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't ; said to be something imperfect in favouring the first complaint ; hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion ; one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the forehead of the morning : what I think I utter, and

spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such wealsmen as you are—I cannot call you Lycurguses—if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I can't say your worships have delivered the matter well, when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables: and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it that I am known well enough too? what harm can your bisson conspectuities glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too?

*Bru.* Come, sir, come, we know you well enough. 60

*Men.* You know neither me, yourselves, nor any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs: you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orangewife and a fosset-seller; and then rejourn the controversy of three pence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinched with the colic, you make faces like mummiers; set up the bloody flag against all patience; and dismiss the controversy bleeding, the more entangled by your hearing: all the peace you make in their cause is, calling both the parties knaves. You are a pair of strange ones. 72

*Bru.* Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary benchman in the Capitol.

*Men.* Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors since Deucalion, though peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. God-den to your



worships : more of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians : I will be bold to take my leave of you. *[Brutus and Sicinius go aside.]*

*Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and VALERIA.*

How now, my as fair as noble ladies,—and the moon, were she earthly, no nobler,—whither do you follow your eyes so fast ? 90

*Vol.* Honourable Menenius, my boy Marcius approaches ; for the love of Juno, let's go.

*Men.* Ha ! Marcius coming home !

*Vol.* Ay, worthy Menenius ; and with most prosperous approbation.

*Men.* Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee. Hoo ! Marcius coming home !

*Vol. Vir.* Nay, 'tis true.

*Vol.* Look, here's a letter from him : the state hath another, his wife another ; and, I think, there's one at home for you. 101

*Men.* I will make my very house reel to-night : a letter for me !

*Vir.* Yes, certain, there's a letter for you ; I saw't.

*Men.* A letter for me ! it gives me an estate of seven years' health ; in which time I will make a lip at the physician : the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiricute, and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse-drench. Is he not wounded ? he was wont to come home wounded. 110

*Vir.* O, no, no, no.

*Vol.* O, he is wounded ; I thank the gods for't.

*Men.* So do I too, if it be not too much : brings a' victory in his pocket ? the wounds become him.

*Vol.* On's brows : Menenius, he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

*Men.* Has he disciplined Aufidius soundly ?

*Vol.* Titus Lartius writes, they fought together, but Aufidius got off.

*Men.* And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that : an he had stayed by him, I would not have been so fidi-used for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possessed of this ? 123

*Vol.* Good ladies, let's go. Yes, yes, yes ; the senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war : he hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly.

*Val.* In troth, there's wondrous things spoke of him.

*Men.* Wondrous ! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing. 130

*Vir.* The gods grant them true !

*Vol.* True ! pow, wow.

*Men.* True ! I'll be sworn they are true. Where is he wounded ? [*To the Tribunes*] God save your good worships ! Marcius is coming home : he has more cause to be proud. Where is he wounded ?

*Vol.* I' the shoulder and i' the left arm : there will be large cicatrices to show the people, when he shall stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i' the body. 140

*Men.* One i' the neck, and two i' the thigh,—there's nine that I know.

*Vol.* He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

*Men.* Now it's twenty-seven : every gash was an enemy's grave. [*A shout and flourish.*] Hark ! the trumpets.

*Vol.* These are the ushers of Marcius : before him he carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears :

Death, that dark spirit, in's nervy arm doth lie :

Which, being advanced, declines, and then men die. 150

*A sennet. Trumpets sound. Enter COMINIUS the general, and TITUS LARTIUS ; between them, CORIOLANUS, crowned with an oaken garland ; with Captains and Soldiers, and a Herald.*

*Her.* Know, Rome, that all alone Marcius did fight  
 Within Corioli gates : where he hath won,  
 With fame, a name to Caius Marcius ; these  
 In honour follows Coriolanus.

Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus ! [*Flourish.*]

*All.* Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus !

*Cor.* No more of this ; it does offend my heart :  
 Pray now, no more.

*Com.* Look, sir, your mother !

*Cor.* O,  
 You have, I know, petition'd all the gods  
 For my prosperity ! [*Kneels.*]

*Vol.* Nay, my good soldier, up ; 160  
 My gentle Caius, worthy Marcius, and  
 By deed-achieving honour newly named,—  
 What is it ?—Coriolanus must I call thee ?—  
 But, O, thy wife !

*Cor.* My gracious silence, hail !  
 Wouldst thou have laugh'd had I come coffin'd home,  
 That weep'st to see me triumph ? Ah, my dear,  
 Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,  
 And mothers that lack sons.

*Men.* Now, the gods crown thee !

*Cor.* And live you yet ? [*To Valeria*] O my sweet lady,  
 pardon.

*Vol.* I know not where to turn : O, welcome home : 170  
 And welcome, general : and ye're welcome all.

*Men.* A hundred thousand welcomes. I could weep  
 And I could laugh, I am light and heavy. Welcome.  
 A curse begin at very root on 's heart,  
 That is not glad to see thee ! You are three  
 That Rome should dote on : yet, by the faith of men,  
 We have some old crab-trees here at home that will not  
 Be grafted to your relish. Yet welcome, warriors :  
 We call a nettle but a nettle and  
 The faults of fools but folly.

*Com.* Ever right. 180

*Cor.* Menenius ever, ever.

*Herald.* Give way there, and go on !

*Cor.* [To *Volumnia* and *Virgilia*] Your hand, and yours :  
Ere in our own house I do shade my head,  
The good patricians must be visited ;  
From whom I have received not only greetings,  
But with them change of honours.

*Vol.* I have lived  
To see inherited my very wishes  
And the buildings of my fancy : only  
There's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but  
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

*Cor.* Know, good mother, 190  
I had rather be their servant in my way,  
Than sway with them in theirs.

*Com.* On, to the Capitol !

[*Flourish.* *Cornets.* *Exeunt in state, as before.*  
*Brutus* and *Sicinius* come forward.]

*Bru.* All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights  
Are spectacled to see him : your prattling nurse  
Into a rapture lets her baby cry  
While she chats of him : the kitchen malkin pins  
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,  
Clambering the walls to eye him : stalls, bulks, windows,  
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges horsed  
With variable complexions, all agreeing 200  
In earnestness to see him : seld-shown flamens  
Do press among the popular throngs and puff  
To win a vulgar station : our veil'd dames  
Commit the war of white and damask in  
Their nicely-gawded cheeks to the wanton spoil  
Of Phœbus' burning kisses : such a pother  
As if that whatsoever god who leads him  
Were silyly crept into his human powers  
And gave him graceful posture.



*Sic.* On the sudden,  
I warrant him consul.

*Bru.* Then our office may, 210  
During his power, go sleep.

*Sic.* He cannot temperately transport his honours  
From where he should begin and end, but will  
Lose those he hath won.

*Bru.* In that there's comfort.

*Sic.* Doubt not  
The commoners, for whom we stand, but they  
Upon their ancient malice will forget  
With the least cause these his new honours, which  
That he will give them make I as little question  
As he is proud to do 't.

*Bru.* I heard him swear,  
Were he to stand for consul, never would he 220  
Appear i' the market-place nor on him put  
The napless vesture of humility ;  
Nor, showing, as the manner is, his wounds  
To the people, beg their stinking breaths.

*Sic.* 'Tis right.

*Bru.* It was his word : O, he would miss it rather  
Than carry it but by the suit of the gentry to him  
And the desire of the nobles.

*Sic.* I wish no better  
Than have him hold that purpose and to put it  
In execution.

*Bru.* 'Tis most like he will.

*Sic.* It shall be to him then as our good wills, 230  
A sure destruction.

*Bru.* So it must fall out  
To him or our authorities. For an end,  
We must suggest the people in what hatred  
He still hath held them ; that to 's power he would  
Have made them mules, silenced their pleaders and  
Dispropertied their freedoms, holding them, .

In human action and capacity,  
Of no more soul nor fitness for the world  
Than camels in the war, who have their provand  
Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows  
For sinking under them. 240

*Sic.*                                 This, as you say, suggested  
At some time when his soaring insolence  
Shall touch the people—which time shall not want,  
If he be put upon 't: and that's as easy  
As to set dogs on sheep—will be his fire  
To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze  
Shall darken him for ever.

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Bru.* What's the matter?

*Mess.* You are sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought  
That Marcius shall be consul :  
I have seen the dumb men throng to see him and  
The blind to hear him speak : matrons flung gloves, 250  
Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchers,  
Upon him as he pass'd : the nobles bended,  
As to Jove's statue, and the commons made  
A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts :  
I never saw the like.

*Bru.* Let's to the Capitol :  
And carry with us ears and eyes for the time,  
But hearts for the event.

*Sic.* Have with you. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *The same. The Capitol.*

*Enter two Officers, to lay cushions.*

*First Off.* Come, come, they are almost here. How many stand for consulships?

*Sec. Off.* Three, they say : but 'tis thought of every one  
Coriolanus will carry it.

*First Off.* That's a brave fellow; but he's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people.

*Sec. Off.* Faith, there have been many great men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them; and there be many that they have loved, they know not wherefore: so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground: therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition: and out of his noble carelessness lets them plainly see't.

*First Off.* If he did not care whether he had their love or no, he waded indifferently 'twixt doing them neither good nor harm: but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him; and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love. 21

*Sec. Off.* He hath deserved worthily of his country: and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonneted, without any further deed to have them at all into their estimation and report: but he hath so planted his honours in their eyes, and his actions in their hearts, that for their tongues to be silent, and not confess so much, were a kind of ingrateful injury; to report otherwise, were a malice, that, giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it. 31

*First Off.* No more of him; he's a worthy man: make way, they are coming.

*A sennet. Enter, with Lictors before them, COMINIUS the consul, MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, Senators, SICINIUS and BRUTUS. The Senators take their places; the Tribunes take their places by themselves. CORIOLANUS stands.*

*Men.* Having determined of the Volsces and To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,

As the main point of this our after-meeting,  
To gratify his noble service that  
Hath thus stood for his country : therefore, please you,  
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire  
The present consul, and last general 40  
In our well-found successes, to report  
A little of that worthy work perform'd  
By Caius Marcius Coriolanus, whom  
We met here both to thank and to remember  
With honours like himself.

*First Sen.* Speak, good Cominius :  
Leave nothing out for length, and make us think  
Rather our state's defective for requital  
Than we to stretch it out. [*To the Tribunes*] Masters o' the  
people,  
We do request your kindest ears, and after,  
Your loving motion toward the common body, 50  
To yield what passes here.

*Sic.* We are convented  
Upon a pleasing treaty, and have hearts  
Inclinable to honour and advance  
The theme of our assembly.

*Bru.* Which the rather  
We shall be blest to do, if he remember  
A kinder value of the people than  
He hath hereto prized them at.

*Men.* That's off, that's off ;  
I would you rather had been silent. Please you  
To hear Cominius speak ?

*Bru.* Most willingly ;  
But yet my caution was more pertinent 60  
Than the rebuke you give it.

*Men.* He loves your people ;  
But tie him not to be their bedfellow.  
Worthy Cominius, speak. [*Coriolanus offers to go away.*]  
Nay, keep your place.



*First Sen.* Sit, Coriolanus ; never shame to hear  
What you have nobly done.

*Cor.* Your honours' pardon :  
I had rather have my wounds to heal again  
Than hear say how I got them.

*Bru.* Sir, I hope  
My words disbench'd you not.

*Cor.* No, sir : yet oft,  
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.  
You soothed not, therefore hurt not : but your people, 70  
I love them as they weigh.

*Men.* Pray now, sit down.

*Cor.* I had rather have one scratch my head i' the sun  
When the alarum were struck than idly sit  
To hear my nothings monster'd. [Exit.

*Men.* Masters of the people,  
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter —  
That's thousand to one good one—when you now see  
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour  
Than one on's ears to hear it ? Proceed, Cominius.

*Com.* I shall lack voice : the deeds of Coriolanus  
Should not be utter'd feebly. It is held 80  
That valour is the chiefest virtue, and  
Most dignifies the haver : if it be,  
The man I speak of cannot in the world  
Be singly counterpoised. At sixteen years,  
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought  
Beyond the mark of others : our then dictator,  
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight,  
When with his Amazonian chin he drove  
The bristled lips before him : he bestrid  
An o'erpress'd Roman and i' the consul's view 90  
Slew three opposers : Tarquin's self he met,  
And struck him on his knee : in that day's feats,  
When he might act the woman in the scene,  
He proved best man i' the field, and for his meed

Was brow-bound with the oak. 'His pupil age  
Man-enter'd thus, he waxed like a sea,  
And in the brunt of seventeen battles since  
He lurch'd all swords of the garland. For this last,  
Before and in Corioli, let me say,  
I cannot speak him home : he stopp'd the fliers ; 100  
And by his rare example made the coward  
Turn terror into sport : as weeds before  
A vessel under sail, so men obey'd  
And fell below his stem : his sword, death's stamp,  
Where it did mark, it took ; from face to foot  
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion  
Was timed with dying cries : alone he enter'd  
The mortal gate of the city, which he painted  
With shunless destiny ; aidless came off,  
And with a sudden re-inforcement struck 110  
Corioli like a planet : now all 's his :  
When, by and by, the din of war gan pierce  
His ready sense ; then straight his doubled spirit  
Re-quicken'd what in flesh was fatigate,  
And to the battle came he ; where he did  
Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if  
'Twere a perpetual spoil : and till we call'd  
Both field and city ours, he never stood  
To ease his breast with panting.

*Men.*

Worthy man !

*First Sen.* He cannot but with measure fit the honours  
Which we devise him.

*Com.*

Our spoils he kick'd at,

121

And look'd upon things precious as they were  
The common muck of the world : he covets less  
Than misery itself would give ; rewards  
His deeds with doing them, and is content  
To spend the time to end it.

*Men.*

He's right noble :

Let him be call'd for.

*First Sen.* Call Coriolanus.

*Off.* He doth appear.

*Re-enter CORIOLANUS.*

*Men.* The senate, Coriolanus, are well pleased  
To make thee consul.

*Cor.* I do owe them still 130  
My life and services.

*Men.* It then remains  
That you do speak to the people.

*Cor.* I do beseech you,  
Let me o'erleap that custom, for I cannot  
Put on the gown, stand naked and entreat them,  
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage : please you  
That I may pass this doing.

*Sic.* Sir, the people  
Must have their voices ; neither will they bate  
One jot of ceremony.

*Men.* Put them not to't :  
Pray you, go fit you to the custom and  
Take to you, as your predecessors have, 140  
Your honour with your form.

*Cor.* It is a part  
That I shall blush in acting, and might well  
Be taken from the people.

*Bru.* Mark you that ?

*Cor.* To brag unto them, thus I did, and thus ;  
Show them the unaching scars which I should hide,  
As if I had received them for the hire  
Of their breath only !

*Men.* Do not stand upon't.  
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,  
Our purpose to them : and to our noble consul  
Wish we all joy and honour. 150

*Senators.* To Coriolanus come all joy and honour ! [*Flourish  
of cornets.* *Exeunt all but Sicinius and Brutus.*

*Bru.* You see how he intends to use the people.

*Sic.* May they perceive's intent ! He will require them,  
As if he did condemn what he requested  
Should be in them to give.

*Bru.* Come, we'll inform them  
Of our proceedings here : on the market-place,  
I know, they do attend us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same. The Forum.*

*Enter seven or eight Citizens.*

*First Cit.* Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

*Sec. Cit.* We may, sir, if we will.

*Third Cit.* We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do ; for if he show us his wounds and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them ; so, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful, were to make a monster of the multitude ; of the which we being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members. 12

*First Cit.* And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve ; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

*Third Cit.* We have been called so of many ; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some auburn, some bald, but that our wits are so diversely coloured : and truly I think if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south, and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' the compass. 21

*Sec. Cit.* Think you so ? Which way do you judge my wit would fly ?

*Third Cit.* Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another



man's will ; 'tis strongly wedged up in a block-head, but if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

*Sec. Cit.* Why that way ?

*Third Cit.* To lose itself in a fog, where being three parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience sake, to help to get thee a wife. 30

*Sec. Cit.* You are never without your tricks : you may, you may.

*Third Cit.* Are you all resolved to give your voices ? But that's no matter, the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never a worthier man.

*Enter CORIOLANUS in a gown of humility, with MENENIUS.*

Here he comes, and in the gown of humility : mark his behaviour. We are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He's to make his requests by particulars ; wherein every one of us has a single honour, in giving him our own voices with our own tongues : therefore follow me, and I'll direct you how you shall go by him.

*All.* Content, content.

*[Exeunt Citizens.]*

*Men.* O sir, you are not right : have you not known  
The worthiest men have done 't ?

*Cor.*

What must I say ?

'I pray, sir,'—Plague upon 't ! I cannot bring  
My tongue to such a pace :—' Look, sir, my wounds !  
I got them in my country's service, when  
Some certain of your brethren roar'd and ran 50  
From the noise of our own drums.'

*Men.*

O me, the gods !

You must not speak of that : you must desire them  
To think upon you.

*Cor.*

Think upon me ! hang 'em !

I would they would forget me, like the virtues  
Which our divines lose by 'em.

*Men.*

You'll mar all :

I'll leave you : pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,  
In wholesome manner.

[*Exit.**Cor.*

Bid them wash their faces

And keep their teeth clean. [*Re-enter two of the Citizens.*]

So, here comes a brace.

[*Re-enter a third Citizen.*

You know the cause, sir, of my standing here.

*Third Cit.* We do, sir ; tell us what hath brought you to 't.*Cor.* Mine own desert.

61

*Sec. Cit.* Your own desert !*Cor.* Ay, but not mine own desire.*Third Cit.* How not your own desire ?

*Cor.* No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet to trouble the poor  
with begging.

*Third Cit.* You must think, if we give you any thing, we  
hope to gain by you.

*Cor.* Well then, I pray, your price o' the consulship ?*First Cit.* The price is to ask it kindly.

70

*Cor.* Kindly ! Sir, I pray, let me ha't : I have wounds to  
show you, which shall be yours in private. Your good voice,  
sir ; what say you ?

*Sec. Cit.* You shall ha't, worthy sir.

*Cor.* A match, sir. There's in all two worthy voices  
begged. I have your alms : adieu.

*Third Cit.* But this is something odd.*Sec. Cit.* An 'twere to give again,—but 'tis no matter.[*Exeunt the three Citizens.**Re-enter two other Citizens.*

*Cor.* Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of your  
voices that I may be consul, I have here the customary  
gown.

81

*Fourth Cit.* You have deserved nobly of your country, and  
you have not deserved nobly.

*Cor.* Your enigma ?

*Fourth Cit.* You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends ; you have not indeed loved the common people.

*Cor.* You should account me the more virtuous that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them ; 'tis a condition they account gentle : and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod and be off to them most counterfeitedly ; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man and give it bountiful to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you, I may be consul.

*Fifth Cit.* We hope to find you our friend ; and therefore give you our voices heartily.

*Fourth Cit.* You have received many wounds for your country. 100

*Cor.* I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble you no further.

*Both Cit.* The gods give you joy, sir, heartily ! [*Exeunt.*]

*Cor.* Most sweet voices !

Better it is to die, better to starve,  
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.  
Why in this woolless toge should I stand here,  
To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,  
Their needless vouches ? Custom calls me to't : 110  
What custom wills, in all things should we do't,  
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,  
And mountainous error be too highly heapt  
For truth to o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,  
Let the high office and the honour go  
To one that would do thus. I am half through ;  
The one part suffer'd, the other will I do.

*Re-enter three Citizens more.*

Here comes more voices.

Your voices : for your voices I have fought ;  
Watch'd for your voices ; for your voices bear 120  
Of wounds two dozen odd ; battles thrice six  
I have seen and heard of ; for your voices have  
Done many things, some less, some more : your voices :  
Indeed, I would be consul.

*Sixth Cit.* He has done nobly, and cannot go without any  
honest man's voice.

*Seventh Cit.* Therefore let him be consul : the gods give  
him joy, and make him good friend to the people.

*All Cit.* Amen, amen. God save thee, noble consul !

[*Exeunt.*

*Cor.* Worthy voices ! 130

*Re-enter MENENIUS, with BRUTUS and SICINIUS.*

*Men.* You have stood your limitation ; and the tribunes  
Endue you with the people's voice : remains  
That, in the official marks invested, you  
Anon do meet the senate.

*Cor.* Is this done ?

*Sic.* The custom of request you have discharged :  
The people do admit you and are summon'd  
To meet anon, upon your approbation.

*Cor.* Where ? at the senate-house ?

*Sic.* There, Coriolanus.

*Cor.* May I change these garments ?

*Sic.* You may, sir.

*Cor.* That I'll straight do ; and, knowing myself again,  
Repair to the senate-house. 141

*Men.* I'll keep you company. Will you along ?

*Bru.* We stay here for the people.

*Sic.* Fare you well.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus and Menenius.*

He has it now, and by his looks methinks  
'Tis warm at 's heart.



*Bru.* With a proud heart he wore his humble weeds.  
Will you dismiss the people?

*Re-enter Citizens.*

*Sic.* How now, my masters ! have you chose this man ?

*First Cit.* He has our voices, sir.

*Bru.* We pray the gods he may deserve your loves. 150

*Sec. Cit.* Amen, sir : to my poor unworthy notice,  
He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.

*Third Cit.* Certainly

He flouted us downright.

*First Cit.* No, 'tis his kind of speech : he did not mock us.

*Sec. Cit.* Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says  
He used us scornfully : he should have show'd us  
His marks of merit, wounds received for 's country.

*Sic.* Why, so he did, I am sure.

*Citizens.* No, no ; no man saw 'em.

*Third Cit.* He said he had wounds, which he could show in  
private ;

And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn, 160

'I would be consul,' says he : 'aged custom,

But by your voices, will not so permit me ;

Your voices therefore.' When we granted that,

Here was 'I thank you for your voices : thank you :

Your most sweet voices : now you have left your voices,

I have no further with you.' Was not this mockery ?

*Sic.* Why either were you ignorant to see 't,

Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness

To yield your voices ?

*Bru.* Could you not have told him,

As you were lesson'd, when he had no power, 170

But was a petty servant to the state,

He was your enemy, ever spake against

Your liberties and the charters that you bear

I' the body o' the weal ; and now, arriving

A place of potency and sway o' the state,

If he should still malignantly remain  
Fast foe to the plebeii, your voices might  
Be curses to yourselves? You should have said  
That as his worthy deeds did claim no less  
Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature 180  
Would think upon you for your voices and  
Translate his malice towards you into love,  
Standing your friendly lord.

*Sic.* Thus to have said,  
As you were fore-advised, had touch'd his spirit  
And tried his inclination; from him pluck'd  
Either his gracious promise, which you might,  
As cause had call'd you up, have held him to:  
Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,  
Which easily endures not article  
Tying him to aught; so putting him to rage, 190  
You should have ta'en the advantage of his choler  
And pass'd him unelected.

*Bru.* Did you perceive  
He did solicit you in free contempt  
When he did need your loves, and do you think  
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you,  
When he hath power to crush? Why, had your bodies  
No heart among you? or had you tongues to cry  
Against the rectorship of judgement?

*Sic.* Have you  
Ere now denied the asker? and now again  
Of him that did not ask, but mock, bestow 200  
Your sued-for tongues?

*Third Cit.* He's not confirm'd; we may deny him yet.

*Sec. Cit.* And will deny him:  
I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

*First Cit.* I twice five hundred and their friends to piece  
'em.

*Bru.* Get you hence instantly, and tell those friends,  
They have chose a consul that will from them take



To be set high in place, we did commend  
To your remembrances : but you have found,  
Scaling his present bearing with his past,  
That he's your fix'd enemy, and revoke  
Your sudden approbation. 240

*Bru.* Say, you ne'er had done't—  
Harp on that still—but by our putting on :  
And presently, when you have drawn your number,  
Repair to the Capitol.

*All.* We will so : almost all  
Repent in their election. [*Exeunt Citizens.*]

*Bru.* Let them go on ;  
This mutiny were better put in hazard,  
Than stay, past doubt, for greater : 250  
If, as his nature is, he fall in rage  
With their refusal, both observe and answer  
The vantage of his anger.

*Sic.* To the Capitol, come :  
We will be there before the stream o' the people ;  
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,  
Which we have goaded onward. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT III.

SCENE I. *Rome. A street.*

*Cornets.* Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, all the Gentry,  
COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, and other Senators.

*Cor.* Tullus Aufidius then had made new head ?

*Lart.* He had, my lord ; and that it was which caused  
Our swifter composition.

*Cor.* So then the Volsces stand but as at first,  
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road  
Upon's again.

*Com.* They are worn, lord consul, so,



That we shall hardly in our ages see  
Their banners wave again.

*Cor.* Saw you Aufidius ?

*Lart.* On safe-guard he came to me ; and did curse  
Against the Volsees, for they had so vilely  
Yielded the town : he is retired to Antium. 10

*Cor.* Spoke he of me ?

*Lart.* He did, my lord,

*Cor.* How ? what ?

*Lart.* How often he had met you, sword to sword ;  
That of all things upon the earth he hated  
Your person most, that he would pawn his fortunes  
To hopeless restitution, so he might  
Be call'd your vanquisher.

*Cor.* At Antium lives he ?

*Lart.* At Antium.

*Cor.* I wish I had a cause to seek him there,  
To oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home. 20

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*Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*

Behold, these are the tribunes of the people,  
The tongues o' the common mouth : I do despise them ;  
For they do prank them in authority,  
Against all noble sufferance.

*Sic.* Pass no further.

*Cor.* Ha ! what is that ?

*Bru.* It will be dangerous to go on : no further.

*Cor.* What makes this change ?

*Men.* The matter ?

*Com.* Hath he not pass'd the noble and the common ?

*Bru.* Cominius, no.

*Cor.* Have I had children's voices ? 30

*First Sen.* Tribunes, give way ; he shall to the market-  
place.

*Bru.* The people are incensed against him.

*Sic.* Stop,

Or all will fall in broil.

*Cor.* Are these your herd ?

Must these have voices, that can yield them now  
And straight disclaim their tongues? What are your needs?  
You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?  
Have you not set them on ?

*Men.* Be calm, be calm.

*Cor.* It is a purposed thing, and grows by plot,  
To curb the will of the nobility :  
Suffer 't, and live with such as cannot rule  
Nor ever will be ruled.

40

*Bru.* Call 't not a plot :

The people cry you mock'd them, and of late,  
When corn was given them gratis, you repined ;  
Scandal'd the suppliants for the people, call'd them  
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

*Cor.* Why, this was known before.

*Bru.* Not to them all.

*Cor.* Have you inform'd them sithence ?

*Bru.* How ! I inform them !

*Com.* You are like to do such business.

*Bru.* Not unlike,

Each way, to better yours.

*Cor.* Why then should I be consul ? By yond clouds, 50  
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me  
Your fellow tribune.

*Sic.* You show too much of that

For which the people stir : if you will pass  
To where you are bound, you must inquire your way,  
Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit,  
Or never be so noble as a consul,  
Nor yoke with him for tribune.

*Men.* Let's be calm.

*Com.* The people are abused ; set on. This paltering  
Becomes not Rome, nor has Coriolanus  
Deserved this so dishonour'd rub, laid falsely

60

In the same way of his merit.

Tell me of corn !  
Tell me my speech, and I will speak 't again—

*Men.* Not now, not now.

*First Sen.* Not in this heat, sir, now.

*Cor.* Now, as I live, I will. My nobler friends,  
I crave their pardons :

For the mutable, rank-scented many, let them  
Regard me as I do not flatter, and  
Therein behold themselves : I say again,  
In soothing them, we nourish 'gainst our senate  
The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition, 70  
Which we ourselves have plough'd for, sow'd, and scatter'd,  
By mingling them with us, the honour'd number,  
Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that  
Which they have given to beggars.

*Men.* Well, no more.

*First Sen.* No more words, we beseech you.

*Cor.* How ! no more !

As for my country I have shed my blood,  
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs  
Coin words till their decay against those measles,  
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought  
The very way to catch them.

*Bru.* You speak o' the people, 80

As if you were a god to punish, not  
A man of their infirmity.

*Sic.* 'Twere well

We let the people know 't.

*Men.* What, what ? his choler ?

*Cor.* Cholera !

Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,  
By Jove, 'twould be my mind !

*Sic.* It is a mind

That shall remain a poison where it is,  
Not poison any further.





One that speaks thus their voice ?

*Cor.* I'll give my reasons,  
More worthier than their voices. They know the corn 120  
Was not our recompense, resting well assured  
They ne'er did service for't : being press'd to the war,  
Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,  
They would not thread the gates. This kind of service  
Did not deserve corn gratis. Being i' the war,  
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd  
Most valour, spoke not for them : the accusation  
Which they have often made against the senate,  
All cause unborn, could never be the motive  
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then ? 130  
How shall this bisson multitude digest  
The senate's courtesy ? Let deeds express  
What's like to be their words : ' We did request it ;  
We are the greater poll, and in true fear  
They gave us our demands.' Thus we debase  
The nature of our seats and make the rabble  
Call our cares fears ; which will in time  
Break ope the locks o' the Senate and bring in  
The crows to peck the eagles.

*Men.* Come, enough.

*Bru.* Enough, with over-measure.

*Cor.* No, take more : 140  
What may be sworn by, both divine and human,  
Seal what I end withal ! This double worship,—  
Where one part does disdain with cause, the other  
Insult without all reason, where gentry, title, wisdom,  
Cannot conclude but by the yea and no  
Of general ignorance,—it must omit  
Real necessities, and give way the while  
To unstable slightness : purpose so barr'd, it follows.  
Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech you,—  
You that will be less fearful than discreet, 150  
That love the fundamental part of state

More than you doubt the change on't, that prefer  
A noble life before a long, and wish  
To jump a body with a dangerous physic  
That's sure of death without it, at once pluck out  
The multitudinous tongue ; let them not lick  
The sweet which is their poison : your dishonour  
Mangles true judgement and bereaves the state  
Of that integrity which should become't,  
Not having the power to do the good it would, 160  
For the ill which doth control't.

*Bru.* Has said enough.

*Sic.* Has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer  
As traitors do.

*Cor.* Thou wretch, despite o'erwhelm thee !  
What should the people do with these bald tribunes ?  
On whom depending, their obedience fails  
To the greater bench : in a rebellion,  
When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,  
Then were they chosen : in a better hour,  
Let what is meet be said it must be meet, 170  
And throw their power i' the dust.

*Bru.* Manifest treason !

*Sic.* This a consul ? no.

*Bru.* The ædiles, ho !

*Enter an Ædile.*

Let him be apprehended.

*Sic.* Go, call the people : [*Exit Ædile*] in whose name myself

Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,  
A foe to the public weal : obey, I charge thee,  
And follow to thine answer.

*Cor.* Hence, old goat !

*Senators, &c.* We'll surety him.

*Com.* Aged sir, hands off.

*Cor.* Hence, rotten thing ! or I shall shake thy bones

Out of thy garments.

*Sic.* Help, ye citizens ! 180

*Enter a rabble of Citizens (Plebeians) with the Ædiles.*

*Men.* On both sides more respect.

*Sic.* Here 's he that would take from you all your power.

*Bru.* Seize him, ædiles !

*Citizens.* Down with him ! down with him !

*Senators, &c.* Weapons, weapons, weapons !

*[They all bustle about Coriolanus, crying*

'Tribunes !' 'Patricians !' 'Citizens !' 'What, ho !'

'Sicinius !' 'Brutus !' 'Coriolanus !' 'Citizens !'

'Peace, peace, peace !' 'Stay, hold, peace !'

*Men.* What is about to be ? I am out of breath ;

Confusion 's near ; I cannot speak. You, tribunes 190

To the people ! Coriolanus, patience !

Speak, good Sicinius.

*Sic.* Hear me, people ; peace !

*Citizens.* Let 's hear our tribune : peace ! Speak, speak,  
speak.

*Sic.* You are at point to lose your liberties :

Marcus would have all from you ; Marcus,

Whom late you have named for consul.

*Men.* Fie, fie, fie !

This is the way to kindle, not to quench.

*First Sen.* To unbuild the city and to lay all flat.

*Sic.* What is the city but the people ?

*Citizens.* True,

The people are the city. 200

*Bru.* By the consent of all, we were establish'd

The people's magistrates.

*Citizens.* You so remain.

*Men.* And so are like to do.

*Com.* That is the way to lay the city flat ;

To bring the roof to the foundation,

And bury all, which yet distinctly ranges,

In heaps and piles of ruin.

*Sic.* This deserves death.

*Bru.* Or let us stand to our authority,  
Or let us lose it. We do here pronounce,  
Upon the part o' the people, in whose power 210  
We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy  
Of present death.

*Sic.* Therefore lay hold of him ;  
Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence  
Into destruction cast him.

*Bru.* Ædiles, seize him !

*Citizens.* Yield, Marcius, yield !

*Men.* Hear me one word ;  
Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.

*Æd.* Peace, peace !

*Men.* [*To Brutus*] Be that you seem, truly your country's  
friend,  
And temperately proceed to what you would  
Thus violently redress.

*Bru.* Sir, those cold ways, 220  
That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous  
Where the disease is violent. Lay hands upon him,  
And bear him to the rock.

*Cor.* No, I'll die here.

[*Drawing his sword.*]

There's some among you have beheld me fighting :  
Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.

*Men.* Down with that sword ! Tribunes, withdraw  
awhile.

*Bru.* Lay hands upon him.

*Men.* Help Marcius, help,  
You that be noble ; help him, young and old !

*Citizens.* Down with him, down with him !

[*In this mutiny, the Tribunes, the Ædiles,  
and the People, are beat in.*]

*Men.* Go, get you to your house ; be gone, away ! 230  
All will be naught else.



*Sec. Sen.* Get you gone.

*Com.* Stand fast ;

We have as many friends as enemies.

*Men.* Shall it be put to that ?

*First Sen.* The gods forbid !

I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house ;

Leave us to cure this cause.

*Men.* For 'tis a sore upon us,

You cannot tent yourself : be gone, beseech you.

*Com.* Come, sir, along with us.

*Cor.* I would they were barbarians—as they are,  
Though in Rome litter'd—not Romans—as they are not,  
Though calved i' the porch o' the Capitol—

*Men.* Be gone ; 240

Put not your worthy rage into your tongue ;

One time will owe another.

*Cor.* On fair ground

I could beat forty of them.

*Men.* I could myself

Take up a brace o' the best of them ; yea, the two tribunes.

*Com.* But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic ;  
And manhood is call'd foolery, when it stands  
Against a falling fabric. Will you hence,  
Before the tag return ? whose rage doth rend  
Like interrupted waters and o'erbear  
What they are used to bear.

*Men.* Pray you, be gone : 250

I'll try whether my old wit be in request

With those that have but little : this must be patch'd

With cloth of any colour.

*Com.* Nay, come away.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus, Cominius, and others.*]

*A Patrician.* This man has marr'd his fortune.

*Men.* His nature is too noble for the world :

He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,

Or Jove for 's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth :

What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent ;  
And, being angry, does forget that ever 259  
He heard the name of death. [*A noise within.*

Here's goodly work !

*Sec. Pat.* I would they were a-bed !

*Men.* I would they were in Tiber ! What, the vengeance !  
Could he not speak 'em fair ?

*Re-enter BRUTUS and SICINIUS, with the rabble.*

*Sic.* Where is this viper  
That would depopulate the city and  
Be every man himself ?

*Men.* You worthy tribunes,—

*Sic.* He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock  
With rigorous hands : he hath resisted law,  
And therefore law shall scorn him further trial  
Than the severity of the public power  
Which he so sets at nought.

*First Cit.* He shall well know 270  
The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,  
And we their hands.

*Citizens.* He shall, sure on't.

*Men.* Sir, sir,—

*Sic.* Peace !

*Men.* Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt  
With modest warrant.

*Sic.* Sir, how comes 't that you  
Have help to make this rescue ?

*Men.* Hear me speak :  
As I do know the consul's worthiness,  
So can I name his faults,—

*Sic.* Consul ! what consul ?

*Men.* The consul Coriolanus.

*Bru.* He consul ! 280

*Citizens.* No, no, no, no.

*Men.* If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good people.

I may be heard, I would crave a word or two ;  
The which shall turn you to no further harm  
Than so much loss of time.

*Sic.* Speak briefly then ;

For we are peremptory to despatch  
This viperous traitor : to eject him hence  
Were but our danger, and to keep him here  
Our certain death : therefore it is decreed  
He dies to-night.

*Men.* Now the good gods forbid

290

That our renowned Rome, whose gratitude  
Towards her deserved children is enroll'd  
In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam  
Should now eat up her own !

*Sic.* He's a disease that must be cut away.

*Men.* O, he's a limb that has but a disease ;

Mortal, to cut it off ; to cure it, easy.

What has he done to Rome that's worthy death ?

Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost—

Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath,

300

By many an ounce—he dropp'd it for his country ;

And what is left, to lose it by his country,

Were to us all, that do't and suffer it,

A brand to the end o' the world.

*Sic.* This is clean kam.

*Bru.* Merely awry : when he did love his country,  
It honour'd him.

*Men.* The service of the foot

Being once gangrened, is not then respected

For what before it was.

*Bru.* We'll hear no more.

Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence ;

Lest his infection, being of catching nature,

310

Spread further.

*Men.* One word more, one word.

This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find

The harm of unscann'd swiftmess, will too late  
Tie leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed by process ;  
Lest parties, as he is beloved, break out,  
And sack great Rome with Romans.

*Bru.*

If it were so,—

*Sic.* What do ye talk ?

Have we not had a taste of his obedience ?  
Our ædiles smote ? Ourselves resisted ? Come.

*Men.* Consider this : he has been bred i' the wars 320  
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill-school'd  
In bolted language ; meal and bran together  
He throws without distinction. Give me leave,  
I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him  
Where he shall answer, by a lawful form,  
In peace, to his utmost peril.

*First Sen.*

Noble tribunes,

It is the humane way : the other course  
Will prove too bloody, and the end of it  
Unknown to the beginning.

*Sic.*

Noble Menenius,

Be you then as the people's officer. 330  
Masters, lay down your weapons.

*Bru.*

Go not home.

*Sic.* Meet on the market-place. We'll attend you there :  
Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed  
In our first way.

*Men.*

I'll bring him to you.

[*To the Senators*] Let me desire your company : he must come,  
Or what is worst will follow.

*First Sen.*

Pray you, let's to him. [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE II. *A room in Coriolanus's house.*

*Enter CORIOLANUS with Patricians.*

*Cor.* Let them pull all about mine ears, present me  
Death on the wheel or at wild horses' heels,



Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,  
That the precipitation might down stretch  
Below the beam of sight, yet will I still  
Be thus to them.

*A Patrician.* You do the nobler.

*Cor.* I muse my mother

Does not approve me further, who was wont  
To call them woollen vassals, things created  
To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads 10  
In congregations, to yawn, be still and wonder,  
When one but of my ordinance stood up  
To speak of peace or war.

*Enter VOLUMNIA.*

I talk of you :

Why did you wish me milder ? would you have me  
False to my nature ? Rather say I play  
The man I am.

*Vol.* O, sir, sir, sir,

I would have had you put your power well on,  
Before you had worn it out.

*Cor.* Let go.

*Vol.* You might have been enough the man you are,  
With striving less to be so : lesser had been 20  
The thwartings of your dispositions, if  
You had not show'd them how you were disposed  
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

*Cor.* Let them hang.

*Vol.* Ay, and burn too.

*Enter MENENIUS and Senators.*

*Men.* Come, come, you have been too rough, something too  
rough ;  
You must return and mend it.

*First Sen.* There's no remedy ;

Unless, by not so doing, our good city

Cleave in the midst, and perish.

*Vol.*

Pray, be counsell'd :

I have a heart as little apt as yours,

But yet a brain that leads my use of anger

30

To better vantage.

*Men.*

Well said, noble woman !

Before he should thus stoop to the herd, but that

The violent fit o' the time craves it as physic

For the whole state, I would put mine armour on,

Which I can scarcely bear.

*Cor.*

What must I do ?

*Men.* Return to the tribunes.

*Cor.*

Well, what then ? what then ?

*Men.* Repent what you have spoke.

*Cor.* For them ! I cannot do it to the gods ;

Must I then do't to them ?

*Vol.*

You are too absolute ;

Though therein you can never be too noble,

40

But when extremities speak. I have heard you say,

Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,

I' the war do grow together : grant that, and tell me,

In peace what each of them by the other lose,

That they combine not there.

*Cor.*

Tush, tush !

*Men.*

A good demand.

*Vol.* If it be honour in your wars to seem

The same you are not, which, for your best ends,

You adopt your policy, how is it less or worse,

That it shall hold companionship in peace

With honour, as in war, since that to both

50

It stands in like request ?

*Cor.*

Why force you this ?

*Vol.* Because that now it lies you on to speak

To the people ; not by your own instruction,

Nor by the matter which your heart prompts you,

But with such words that are but roted in

Your tongue, though but bastards and syllables  
Of no allowance to your bosom's truth.

Now, this no more dishonours you at all

Than to take in a town with gentle words,

Which else would put you to your fortune and

60

The hazard of much blood.

I would dissemble with my nature where

My fortunes and my friends at stake required

I should do so in honour : I am, in this,

Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles ;

And you will rather show our general louts

How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em,

For the inheritance of their loves and safeguard

Of what that want might ruin.

*Men.*

Noble lady !

Come, go with us ; speak fair : you may salve so,

70

Not what is dangerous present, but the loss

Of what is past.

*Vol.*

I prithee now, my son,

Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand ;

And thus far having stretch'd it—here be with them—

Thy knee bussing the stones—for in such business

Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant

More learned than the ears—waving thy head,

Which often thus correcting thy stout heart,

Now humble as the ripest mulberry

That will not hold the handling,—say to them,

80

Thou art their soldier, and being bred in broils

Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,

Were fit for thee to use as they to claim,

In asking their good loves, but thou wilt frame

Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far

As thou hast power and person.

*Men.*

This but done,

Even as she speaks, why, their hearts were yours ;

For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free

As words to little purpose.

*Vol.*

Prithee now,

Go, and be ruled : although I know thou hadst rather 90

Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf

Than flatter him in a bower. Here is Cominius.

*Enter COMINIUS.*

*Com.* I have been i' the market-place ; and, sir, 'tis fit

You make strong party, or defend yourself

By calmness, or by absence : all's in anger.

*Men.* Only fair speech.

*Com.*

I think 'twill serve, if he

Can thereto frame his spirit.

*Vol.*

He must, and will.

Prithee now, say you will, and go about it.

*Cor.* Must I go show them my unbarbed sconce ?

Must I with base tongue give my noble heart 100

A lie that it must bear ? Well, I will do't :

Yet, were there but this single plot to lose,

This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it

And throw't against the wind. To the market-place !

You have put me now to such a part which never

I shall discharge to the life.

*Com.*

Come, come, we'll prompt you.

*Vol.* I prithee now, sweet son, as thou hast said

My praises made thee first a soldier, so,

To have my praise for this, perform a part

Thou hast not done before.

*Cor.*

Well, I must do't :

110

Away, my disposition, and possess me

Some harlot's spirit ! my throat of war be turn'd,

Which quired with my drum, into a pipe

Small as an eunuch, or the virgin voice

That babies lull asleep ! the smiles of knaves

Tent in my cheeks, and schoolboys' tears take up



The glasses of my sight ! a beggar's tongue  
Make motion through my lips, and my arm'd knees,  
Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his  
That hath received an alms ! I will not do't, 120  
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth  
And by my body's action teach my mind  
A most inherent baseness.

*Vol.* At thy choice, then :

To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour  
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin ; let  
Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear  
Thy dangerous stoutness, for I mock at death  
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.  
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst from me,  
But owe thy pride thyself.

*Cor.* Pray, be content : 130

Mother, I am going to the market-place ;  
Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,  
Cog their hearts from them, and come home beloved  
Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going :  
Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul ;  
Or never trust to what my tongue can do  
If the way of flattery further.

*Vol.* Do your will. [Exit.

*Com.* Away ! the tribunes do attend you : arm yourself  
To answer mildly ; for they are prepared  
With accusations, as I hear, more strong 140  
Than are upon you yet.

*Cor.* The word is 'mildly.' Pray you, let us go :  
Let them accuse me by invention, I  
Will answer in mine honour.

*Men.* Ay, but mildly.

*Cor.* Well, mildly be it then. Mildly ! [Exeunt.

SCENE III. *The same. The Forum.**Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*

*Bru.* In this point charge him home, that he affects  
Tyrannical power : if he evade us there,  
Enforce him with his envy to the people,  
And that the spoil got on the Antiates  
Was ne'er distributed.

*Enter an Ædile.*

What, will he come ?

*Æd.* He's coming.

*Bru.* How accompanied ?

*Æd.* With old Menenius, and those senators  
That always favour'd him.

*Sic.* Have you a catalogue  
Of all the voices that we have procured  
Set down by the poll ?

*Æd.* I have ; 'tis ready.

10

*Sic.* Have you collected them by tribes ?

*Æd.* I have.

*Sic.* Assemble presently the people hither ;  
And when they hear me say 'It shall be so  
I' the right and strength o' the commons,' be it either  
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,  
If I say fine, cry 'Fine ;' if death, cry 'Death.'  
Insisting on the old prerogative  
And power i' the truth o' the cause.

*Æd.* I shall inform them.

*Bru.* And when such time they have begun to cry,  
Let them not cease, but with a din confused  
Enforce the present execution  
Of what we chance to sentence.

20

*Æd.* Very well.

*Sic.* Make them be strong and ready for this hint,  
When we shall hap to give't them.

*Bru.*Go about it. [*Exit Ædile.*

Put him to choler straight : he hath been used  
Ever to conquer, and to have his worth  
Of contradiction : being once chafed, he cannot  
Be rein'd again to temperance ; then he speaks  
What's in his heart ; and that is there which looks  
With us to break his neck.

*Sic.*

Well, here he comes.

30

*Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, and COMINIUS, with Senators  
and Patricians.*

*Men.* Calmly, I do beseech you.

*Cor.* Ay, as an ostler, that for the poorest piece  
Will bear the knave by the volume. The honour'd gods  
Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice  
Supplied with worthy men ! plant love among's !  
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,  
And not our streets with war !

*First Sen.*

— Amen, amen.

*Men.* A noble wish.

*Re-enter Ædile, with Citizens.*

*Sic.* Draw near, ye people.*Æd.* List to your tribunes. Audience ! peace, I say ! 40*Cor.* First, hear me speak.*Both Tri.*

Well, say. Peace, ho !

*Cor.* Shall I be charged no further than this present ?

Must all determine here ?

*Sic.*

I do demand,

If you submit you to the people's voices,  
Allow their officers and are content  
To suffer lawful censure for such faults  
As shall be proved upon you ?

*Cor.*

I am content.

*Men.* Lo, citizens, he says he is content :

The warlike service he has done, consider ; think  
Upon the wounds his body bears, which show 50  
Like graves i' the holy churchyard.

*Cor.* Scratches with briars,  
Scars to move laughter only.

*Men.* Consider further,  
That when he speaks not like a citizen,  
You find him like a soldier : do not take  
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,  
But, as I say, such as become a soldier,  
Rather than envy you.

*Com.* Well, well, no more.

*Cor.* What is the matter  
That being pass'd for consul with full voice,  
I am so dishonour'd that the very hour 60  
You take it off again ?

*Sic.* Answer to us.

*Cor.* Say, then : 'tis true, I ought so.

*Sic.* We charge you, that you have contrived to take  
From Rome all season'd office and to wind  
Yourself into a power tyrannical ;  
For which you are a traitor to the people.

*Cor.* How ! traitor !

*Men.* Nay, temperately ; your promise.

*Cor.* The fires i' the lowest hell fold-in the people !  
Call me their traitor ! Thou injurious tribune !  
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths, 70  
In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in  
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say  
'Thou liest' unto thee with a voice as free  
As I do pray the gods.

*Sic.* Mark you this, people ?

*Citizens.* To the rock, to the rock with him !

*Sic.* Peace !

We need not put new matter to his charge :  
What you have seen him do and heard him speak,



Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,  
Opposing laws with strokes and here defying  
Those whose great power must try him ; even this, 80  
So criminal and in such capital kind,  
Deserves the extremest death.

*Bru.* But since he hath  
Served well for Rome,—

*Cor.* What do you prate of service ?

*Bru.* I talk of that, that know it.

*Cor.* You ?

*Men.* Is this the promise that you made your mother ?

*Com.* Know, I pray you,—

*Cor.* I'll know no further :

Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,  
Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger  
But with a grain a day, I would not buy 90  
Their mercy at the price of one fair word ;  
Nor check my courage for what they can give,  
To have't with saying ' Good morrow.'

*Sic.* For that he has,  
As much as in him lies, from time to time  
Envied against the people, seeking means  
To pluck away their power, as now at last  
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence  
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers  
That do distribute it ; in the name o' the people  
And in the power of us the tribunes, we, 100  
Even from this instant, banish him our city,  
In peril of precipitation  
From off the rock Tarpeian, never more  
To enter our Rome gates : i' the people's name,  
I say it shall be so.

*Citizens.* It shall be so, it shall be so ; let him away :  
He's banish'd, and it shall be so.

*Com.* Hear me, my masters, and my common friends,—

*Sic.* He's sentenced ; no more hearing.

*Com.*

Let me speak :

I have been consul, and can show for Rome 110  
Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love  
My country's good with a respect more tender,  
More holy and profound, than mine own life,  
My dear wife's estimate, her womb's increase,  
And treasure of my loins ; then if I would  
Speak that,—

*Sic.* We know your drift : speak what ?

*Bru.* There's no more to be said, but he is banish'd,  
As enemy to the people and his country :  
It shall be so.

*Citizens.* It shall be so, it shall be so.

*Cor.* You common cry of curs ! whose breath I hate 120  
As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize  
As the dead carcasses of unburied men  
That do corrupt my air, I banish you ;  
And here remain with your uncertainty !  
Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts !  
Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,  
Fan you into despair ! Have the power still  
To banish your defenders ; till at length  
Your ignorance, which finds not till it feels,  
Making not reservation of yourselves, 130  
Still your own foes, deliver you as most  
Abated captives to some nation  
That won you without blows ! Despising,  
For you, the city, thus I turn my back :  
There is a world elsewhere.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus, Cominius, Menenius,  
Senators, and Patricians.*]

*Æd.* The people's enemy is gone, is gone !*Citizens.* Our enemy is banish'd ! he is gone ! Hoo ! hoo ![*Shouting, and throwing up their caps.*]

*Sic.* Go, see him out at gates, and follow him,  
As he hath follow'd you, with all despite ;

Give him deserved vexation. Let a guard 140  
Attend us through the city.

*Citizens.* Come, come ; let's see him out at gates ; come.  
The gods preserve our noble tribunes ! Come. [*Exeunt.*]

# ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Rome. Before a gate of the city.*

*Enter* CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, *with the young Nobility of Rome.*

*Cor.* Come, leave your tears : a brief farewell : the beast  
With many heads butts me away. Nay, mother,  
Where is your ancient courage ? you were used  
To say extremity was the trier of spirits ;  
That common chances common men could bear ;  
That when the sea was calm all boats alike  
Show'd mastership in floating ; fortune's blows,  
When most struck home, being gentle wounded, craves  
A noble cunning : you were used to load me  
With precepts that would make invincible 10  
The heart that conn'd them.

*Vir.* O heavens ! O heavens !

*Cor.* Nay, I prithee, woman,—

*Vol.* Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,  
And occupations perish !

*Cor.* What, what, what !

I shall be loved when I am lack'd. Nay, mother,  
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,  
If you had been the wife of Hercules,  
Six of his labours you'd have done, and saved  
Your husband so much sweat. Cominius,  
Droop not ; adieu. Farewell, my wife, my mother : 20  
I'll do well yet. Thou old and true Menenius,  
Thy tears are salter than a younger man's,  
And venomous to thine eyes. My sometime general,

I have seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld  
Heart-hardening spectacles ; tell these sad women  
'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes,  
As 'tis to laugh at 'em. My mother, you wot well  
My hazards still have been your solace : and  
Believe't not lightly—though I go alone,  
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen  
Makes fear'd and talk'd of more than seen—your son  
Will or exceed the common or be caught  
With cautelous baits and practice.

30

*Vol.* My first son,  
Whither wilt thou go ? Take good Cominius  
With thee awhile : determine on some course,  
More than a wild exposture to each chance  
That starts i' the way before thee.

*Cor.* O the gods !

*Com.* I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee  
Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us  
And we of thee : so if the time thrust forth  
A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send  
O'er the vast world to seek a single man,  
And lose advantage, which doth ever cool  
I' the absence of the needer.

40

*Cor.* Fare ye well :  
Thou hast years upon thee ; and thou art too full  
Of the wars' surfeits to go rove with one  
That's yet unbruised : bring me but out at gate,  
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and  
My friends of noble touch, when I am forth,  
Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come.  
While I remain above the ground, you shall  
Hear from me still, and never of me aught  
But what is like me formerly.

50

*Men.* That's worthily  
As any ear can hear. Come, let's not weep.  
If I could shake off but one seven years



From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,  
I 'ld with thee every foot.

*Cor.* Give me thy hand :

Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The same. A street near the gate.*

*Enter* SICINIUS, BRUTUS, and an Ædile.

*Sic.* Bid them all home ; he's gone, and we'll no further.  
The nobility are vex'd, whom we see have sided  
In his behalf.

*Bru.* Now we have shown our power,  
Let us seem humbler after it is done  
Than when it was a-doing.

*Sic.* Bid them home ;  
Say their great enemy is gone, and they  
Stand in their ancient strength.

*Bru.* Dismiss them home. [*Exit Ædile.*]  
Here comes his mother.

*Sic.* Let's not meet her.

*Bru.* Why ?

*Sic.* They say she's mad.

*Bru.* They have ta'en note of us : keep on your way. 10

*Enter* VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and MENENIUS.

*Vol.* O, ye're well met : the hoarded plague o' the gods  
Requite your love !

*Men.* Peace, peace ; be not so loud.

*Vol.* If that I could for weeping, you should hear,—  
Nay, and you shall hear some. [*To Brutus*] Will you be  
gone ?

*Vir.* [*To Sicinius*] You shall stay too : I would I had the  
power  
To say so to my husband.

*Sic.* Are you mankind ?

*Vol.* Ay, fool ; is that a shame ? Note but this fool.  
Was not a man my father ? Hadst thou foxship  
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome  
Than thou hast spoken words ?

*Sic.* O blessed heavens ! 20

*Vol.* More noble blows than ever thou wise words ;  
And for Rome's good. I'll tell thee what ; yet go :  
Nay, but thou shalt stay too : I would my son  
Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him,  
His good sword in his hand.

*Sic.* What then ?

*Vir.* What then !

He'd make an end of thy posterity.

*Vol.* Bastards and all.

Good man, the wounds that he does bear for Rome !

*Men.* Come, come, peace.

*Sic.* I would he had continued to his country 30

As he began, and not unknit himself  
The noble knot he made.

*Bru.* I would he had.

*Vol.* 'I would he had' ! 'Twas you incensed the rabble :  
Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth  
As I can of those mysteries which heaven  
Will not have earth to know.

*Bru.* Pray, let us go.

*Vol.* Now, pray, sir, get you gone :  
You have done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this :—  
As far as doth the Capitol exceed  
The meanest house in Rome, so far my son— 40  
This lady's husband here, this, do you see—  
Whom you have banish'd, does exceed you all.

*Bru.* Well, well, we'll leave you.

*Sic.* Why stay we to be baited

With one that wants her wits ?

*Vol.* Take my prayers with you.

[*Exeunt Tribunes.*]

I would the gods had nothing else to do  
But to confirm my curses ! Could I meet 'em  
But once a-day, it would unclog my heart  
Of what lies heavy to't.

*Men.* You have told them home ;  
And, by my troth, you have cause. You 'll sup with me ?

*Vol.* Anger 's my meat ; I sup upon myself, 50  
And so shall starve with feeding. Come, let's go :  
Leave this faint puling, and lament as I do,  
In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.

*Men.* Fie, fie, fie ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A highway between Rome and Antium.*

*Enter a Roman and a Volsce, meeting.*

*Rom.* I know you well, sir, and you know me : your name,  
I think, is Adrian.

*Vols.* It is so, sir : truly, I have forgot you.

*Rom.* I am a Roman ; and my services are, as you are,  
against 'em : know you me yet ?

*Vols.* Nicanor ? no.

*Rom.* The same, sir.

*Vols.* You had more beard when I last saw you ; but your  
favour is well appeared by your tongue. What's the news  
in Rome ? I have a note from the Volscian state, to find you  
out there : you have well saved me a day's journey. 11

*Rom.* There hath been in Rome strange insurrections ; the  
people against the senators, patricians, and nobles.

*Vols.* Hath been ! is it ended, then ? Our state thinks not  
so : they are in a most warlike preparation, and hope to  
come upon them in the heat of their division.

*Rom.* The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing would  
make it flame again : for the nobles receive so to heart the  
banishment of that worthy Coriolanus, that they are in a  
ripe aptness to take all power from the people and to pluck

from them their tribunes for ever. This lies glowing, I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out.

*Vol.* Coriolanus banished ! 23

*Rom.* Banished, sir.

*Vol.* You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor.

*Rom.* The day serves well for them now. I have heard it said, the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she's fallen out with her husband. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country. 30

*Vol.* He cannot choose. I am most fortunate, thus accidentally to encounter you : you have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home.

*Rom.* I shall, between this and supper, tell you most strange things from Rome ; all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you ?

*Vol.* A most royal one ; the centurions and their charges, distinctly billeted, already in the entertainment, and to be on foot at an hour's warning. 39

*Rom.* I am joyful to hear of their readiness, and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So, sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

*Vol.* You take my part from me, sir ; I have the most cause to be glad of yours.

*Rom.* Well, let us go together. . [ *Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Antium. Before Aufidius's house.*

*Enter CORIOLANUS in mean apparel, disguised and muffled.*

*Cor.* A goodly city is this Antium. City,  
'Tis I that made thy widows : many an heir  
Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars  
Have I heard groan and drop : then know me not,  
Lest that thy wives with spits and boys with stones  
In puny battle slay me.



*Enter a Citizen.*

Save you, sir.

*Cit.* And you.

*Cor.* Direct me, if it be your will,  
Where great Aufidius lies : is he in Antium ?

*Cit.* He is, and feasts the nobles of the state  
At his house this night.

*Cor.* Which is his house, beseech you ? 10

*Cit.* This, here before you.

*Cor.* Thank you, sir : farewell.

*[Exit Citizen.]*

O world, thy slippery turns ! Friends now fast sworn,  
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,  
Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,  
Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love  
Unseparable, shall within this hour,  
On a dissension of a doit, break out  
To bitterest enmity : so, fellest foes,  
Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep  
To take the one the other, by some chance, 20  
Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends  
And interjoin their issues. So with me :  
My birth-place hate I, and my love's upon  
This enemy town. I'll enter : if he slay me,  
He does fair justice ; if he give me way,  
I'll do his country service. *[Exit.]*

SCENE V. *The same. A hall in Aufidius's house.*

*Music within. Enter a Servingman.*

*First Serv.* Wine, wine, wine ! What service is here ! I  
think our fellows are asleep. *[Exit.]*

*Enter a second Servingman.*

*Sec. Serv.* Where's Cotus ? my master calls for him.  
Cotus !

*Enter CORIOLANUS.*

*Cor.* A goodly house : the feast smells well ; but I  
Appear not like a guest.

*Re-enter the first Servingman.*

*First Serv.* What would you have, friend ? whence are  
you ? Here's no place for you : pray go to the door. [*Exit.*

*Cor.* I have deserved no better entertainment,  
In being Coriolanus. 10

*Re-enter second Servingman.*

*Sec. Serv.* Whence are you, sir ? Has the porter his eyes in  
his head, that he gives entrance to such companions ? Pray,  
get you out.

*Cor.* Away !

*Sec. Serv.* Away ! get you away.

*Cor.* Now thou'rt troublesome.

*Sec. Serv.* Are you so brave ? I'll have you talked with  
anon.

*Enter a third Servingman. The first meets him.*

*Third Serv.* What fellow's this ?

*First Serv.* A strange one as ever I looked on : I cannot  
get him out o' the house : prithee, call my master to him. 21  
[*Retires.*

*Third Serv.* What have you to do here, fellow ? Pray you,  
avoid the house.

*Cor.* Let me but stand ; I will not hurt your hearth.

*Third Serv.* What are you ?

*Cor.* A gentleman.

*Third Serv.* A marvellous poor one.

*Cor.* True, so I am.

*Third Serv.* Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other  
station ; here's no place for you ; pray you, avoid : come. 30

*Cor.* Follow your function, go, and batten on cold bits.

[*Pushes him away.*

*Third Serv.* What, you will not? Prithee, tell my master what a strange guest he has here.

*Sec. Serv.* And I shall.

[*Exit.*

*Third Serv.* Where dwellest thou?

*Cor.* Under the canopy.

*Third Serv.* Under the canopy!

*Cor.* Ay.

*Third Serv.* Where's that?

*Cor.* I' the city of kites and crows. 40

*Third Serv.* I' the city of kites and crows! What an ass it is! Then thou dwellest with daws too?

*Cor.* No, I serve not thy master.

*Third Serv.* How, sir! do you meddle with my master?

*Cor.* Thou pratest, and pratest; serve with thy trencher, hence! [*Beats him away. Exit third Servingman.*

*Enter AufIDIUS with the second Servingman.*

*Auf.* Where is this fellow?

*Sec. Serv.* Here, sir: I'd have beaten him like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within. [*Retires.*

*Auf.* Whence comest thou? what wouldst thou? thy name?

Why speak'st not? speak, man: what's thy name? 50

*Cor.* If, Tullus, [*Unmuffling.*

Not yet thou knowest me, and, seeing me, dost not

Think me for the man I am, necessity

Commands me name myself.

*Auf.* What is thy name?

*Cor.* A name unmusical to the Volscians' ears,  
And harsh in sound to thine.

*Auf.* Say, what's thy name?

Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face

Bears a command in't; though thy tackle's torn,

Thou show'st a noble vessel: what's thy name?

*Cor.* Prepare thy brow to frown: know'st thou me yet?

*Auf.* I know thee not: thy name?

61

*Cor.* My name is Caius Marcius, who hath done  
To thee particularly and to all the Volsces  
Great hurt and mischief ; thereto witness may  
My surname, Coriolanus ; the painful service,  
The extreme dangers and the drops of blood  
Shed for my thankless country are requited  
But with that surname ; a good memory,  
And witness of the malice and displeasure  
Which thou shouldst bear me : only that name remains ;  
The cruelty and envy of the people, 71  
Permitted by our dastard nobles, who  
Have all forsook me, hath devour'd the rest ?  
And suffer'd me by the voice of slaves to be  
Hoop'd out of Rome. Now this extremity  
Hath brought me to thy hearth ; not out of hope—  
Mistake me not—to save my life, for if  
I had fear'd death, of all the men i' the world  
I would have 'voided thee, but in mere spite,  
To be full quit of those my banishers, 80  
Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast  
A heart of wreak in thee, that wilt revenge  
Thine own particular wrongs and stop those maims  
Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight,  
And make my misery serve thy turn : so use it  
That my revengeful services may prove  
As benefits to thee, for I will fight  
Against my canker'd country with the spleen  
Of all the under fiends. But if so be  
Thou darest not this and that to prove more fortunes 90  
Thou'rt tired, then, in a word, I also am  
Longer to live most weary, and present  
My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice ;  
Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,  
Since I have ever follow'd thee with hate,  
Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,  
And cannot live but to thy shame, unless



It be to do thee service.

*Auf.*

O Marcius, Marcius !

Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart  
A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter 100  
Should from yond cloud speak divine things,  
And say 'Tis true,' I'd not believe them more  
Than thee, all noble Marcius. Let me twine  
Mine arms about that body, where against  
My grained ash an hundred times hath broke,  
And scarr'd the moon with splinters : here I clip  
The anvil of my sword, and do contest  
As hotly and as nobly with thy love  
As ever in ambitious strength I did  
Contend against thy valour. Know thou first, 110  
I loved the maid I married ; never man  
Sigh'd truer breath ; but that I see thee here,  
Thou noble thing ! more dances my rapt heart  
Than when I first my wedded mistress saw  
Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars ! I tell thee,  
We have a power on foot ; and I had purpose  
Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,  
Or lose mine arm for't : thou hast beat me out  
Twelve several times, and I have nightly since  
Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me ; 120  
We have been down together in my sleep,  
Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,  
And waked half dead with nothing. Worthy Marcius,  
Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that  
Thou art thence banish'd, we would muster all  
From twelve to seventy, and pouring war  
Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,  
Like a bold flood o'er-bear. O, come, go in,  
And take our friendly senators by the hands ;  
Who now are here, taking their leaves of me, 130  
Who am prepared against your territories,  
Though not for Rome itself.

*Cor.* You bless me, gods !

*Auf.* Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have  
The leading of thine own revenges, take  
The one half of my commission ; and set down—  
As best thou art experienced, since thou know'st  
Thy country's strength and weakness,—thine own ways ;  
Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,  
Or rudely visit them in parts remote,  
To fright them, ere destroy. But come in : 140  
Let me commend thee first to those that shall  
Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes !  
And more a friend than e'er an enemy ;  
Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand : most welcome !

[*Exeunt Coriolanus and Aufidius. The  
two Servingmen come forward.*]

*First Serv.* Here's a strange alteration !

*Sec. Serv.* By my hand, I had thought to have stricken  
him with a cudgel ; and yet my mind gave me his clothes  
made a false report of him.

*First Serv.* What an arm he has ! he turned me about with  
his finger and his thumb, as one would set up a top. 150

*Sec. Serv.* Nay, I knew by his face that there was some-  
thing in him : he had, sir, a kind of face, methought,—I  
cannot tell how to term it.

*First Serv.* He had so ; looking as it were—would I were  
hanged, but I thought there was more in him than I could  
think.

*Sec. Serv.* So did I, I'll be sworn : he is simply the rarest  
man i' the world.

*First Serv.* I think he is : but a greater soldier than he, you  
wot one. 160

*Sec. Serv.* Who, my master ?

*First Serv.* Nay, it's no matter for that.

*Sec. Serv.* Worth six on him.

*First Serv.* Nay, not so neither : but I take him to be the  
greater soldier.

*Sec. Serv.* Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that : for the defence of a town, our general is excellent.

*First Serv.* Ay, and for an assault too.

*Re-enter third Servingman.*

*Third Serv.* O slaves, I can tell you news,—news, you rascals ! 170

*First and Sec. Serv.* What, what, what ? let's partake.

*Third Serv.* I would not be a Roman, of all nations ; I had as lieve be a condemned man.

*First and Sec. Serv.* Wherefore ? wherefore ?

*Third Serv.* Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general, Caius Marcius.

*First Serv.* Why do you say 'thwack our general' ?

*Third Serv.* I do not say 'thwack our general ;' but he was always good enough for him.

*Sec. Serv.* Come, we are fellows and friends : he was ever too hard for him ; I have heard him say so himself. 181

*First Serv.* He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on't : before Corioli he scotched him and notched him like a carbonado.

*Sec. Serv.* An he had been cannibally given, he might have broiled and eaten him too.

*First Serv.* But, more of thy news ?

*Third Serv.* Why, he is so made on here within, as if he were son and heir to Mars ; set at upper end o' the table ; no question asked him by any of the senators, but they stand bald before him ; our general himself makes a mistress of him ; sanctifies himself with's hand and turns up the white o' the eye to his discourse. But the bottom of the news is, our general is cut i' the middle and but one half of what he was yesterday ; for the other has half, by the entreaty and grant of the whole table. He'll go, he says, and sowl the porter of Rome gates by the ears : he will mow all down before him, and leave his passage polled.

*Sec. Serv.* And he's as like to do't as any man I can imagine. 200

*Third Serv.* Do't! he will do't; for, look you, sir, he has as many friends as enemies; which friends, sir, as it were, durst not, look you, sir, show themselves, as we term it, his friends whilst he's in directitude.

*First Serv.* Directitude! what's that?

*Third Serv.* But when they shall see, sir, his crest up again, and the man in blood, they will out of their burrows, like conies after rain, and revel all with him.

*First Serv.* But when goes this forward? 209

*Third Serv.* To-morrow; to-day; presently; you shall have the drum struck up this afternoon: 'tis, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips.

*Sec. Serv.* Why, then, we shall have a stirring world again. This peace is nothing, but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers. 216

*First Serv.* Let me have war, say I; it exceeds peace as far as day does night; it's sprightly walking, audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible. Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

*Third Serv.* Reason; because they then less need one another. The wars for my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising, they are rising.

*All.* In, in, in, in! [Exeunt.]

SCENE VI. Rome. A public place.

*Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*

*Sic.* We hear not of him, neither need we fear him;  
His remedies are tame i' the present peace  
And quietness of the people, which before  
Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends  
Blush that the world goes well, who rather had,



Though they themselves did suffer by 't, behold  
 Dissentious numbers pestering streets than see  
 Our tradesmen singing in their shops and going  
 About their functions friendly.

*Bru.* We stood to 't in good time. [*Enter Menenius.*] Is  
 this Menenius? 10

*Sic.* 'Tis he, 'tis he : O, he is grown most kind of late.

*Both Tri.* Hail, sir !

*Men.* Hail to you both !

*Sic.* Your Coriolanus

Is not much miss'd, but with his friends :  
 The commonwealth doth stand, and so would do,  
 Were he more angry at it.

*Men.* All's well ; and might have been much better, if  
 He could have temporized.

*Sic.* Where is he, hear you ?

*Men.* Nay, I hear nothing : his mother and his wife  
 Hear nothing from him.

*Enter three or four Citizens.*

*Citizens.* The gods preserve you both !

*Sic.* God-den, our neighbours. 20

*Bru.* God-den to you all, god-den to you all.

*First Cit.* Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our knees,  
 Are bound to pray for you both.

*Sic.* Live, and thrive !

*Bru.* Farewell, kind neighbours : we wish'd Coriolanus  
 Had loved you as we did.

*Citizens.* Now the gods keep you !

*Both Tri.* Farewell, farewell. [*Exeunt Citizens*]

*Sic.* This is a happier and more comely time  
 Than when these fellows ran about the streets,  
 Crying confusion.

*Bru.* Caius Marcius was  
 A worthy officer i' the war ; but insolent,  
 O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking, 30

Self-loving,—

*Sic.* And affecting one sole throne,  
Without assistance.

*Men.* I think not so.

*Sic.* We should by this, to all our lamentation.  
If he had gone forth consul, found it so.

*Bru.* The gods have well prevented it, and Rome  
Sits safe and still without him.

*Enter an Ædile.*

*Æd.* Worthy tribunes,  
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,  
Reports, the Volsces with two several powers  
Are enter'd in the Roman territories,  
And with the deepest malice of the war  
Destroy what lies before 'em.

40

*Men.* 'Tis Aufidius,  
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,  
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world ;  
Which were inshell'd when Marcius stood for Rome,  
And durst not once peep out.

*Sic.* Come, what talk you  
Of Marcius ?

*Bru.* Go see this rumourer whipp'd. It cannot be  
The Volsces dare break with us.

*Men.* Cannot be !

We have record that very well it can,  
And three examples of the like have been  
Within my age. But reason with the fellow,  
Before you punish him, where he heard this,  
Lest you shall chance to whip your information  
And beat the messenger who bids beware  
Of what is to be dreaded.

50

*Sic.* Tell not me :  
I know this cannot be.

*Bru.* Not possible.

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* The nobles in great earnestness are going  
All to the senate-house : some news is come  
That turns their countenances.

*Sic.* 'Tis this slave ;—  
Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes :—his raising ; 60  
Nothing but his report.

*Mess.* Yes, worthy sir,  
The slave's report is seconded ; and more,  
More fearful, is deliver'd.

*Sic.* What more fearful ?

*Mess.* It is spoke freely out of many mouths—  
How probable I do not know—that Marcius,  
Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome,  
And vows revenge as spacious as between  
The young'st and oldest thing.

*Sic.* This is most likely !

*Bru.* Raised only, that the weaker sort may wish  
Good Marcius home again.

*Sic.* The very trick on't. 70

*Men.* This is unlikely :  
He and Aufidius can no more atone  
Than violentest contrariety.

*Enter a second Messenger.*

*Sec. Mess.* You are sent for to the senate :  
A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius  
Associated with Aufidius, rages  
Upon our territories ; and have already  
O'erborne their way, consumed with fire, and took  
What lay before them.

*Enter COMINIUS.*

*Com.* O, you have made good work !

*Men.* What news ? what news ? 80

*Com.* You have help to ravish your own daughters and  
To melt the city leads upon your pates,  
To see your wives dishonour'd to your noses,—

*Men.* What 's the news? what 's the news?

*Com.* Your temples burned in their cement, and  
Your franchises, whereon you stood, confined  
Into an auger's bore.

*Men.* Pray now, your news?

You have made fair work, I fear me.—Pray, your news?—  
If Marcius should be join'd with Volscians,—

*Com.* If!

He is their god : he leads them like a thing 90  
Made by some other deity than nature,  
That shapes man better ; and they follow him,  
Against us brats, with no less confidence  
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,  
Or butchers killing flies.

*Men.* You have made good work,  
You and your apron-men ; you that stood so much  
Upon the voice of occupation and  
The breath of garlic-eaters !

*Com.* He will shake  
Your Rome about your ears.

*Men.* As Hercules  
Did shake down mellow fruit. You have made fair work !

*Bru.* But is this true, sir?

*Com.* Ay ; and you'll look pale 101  
Before you find it other. All the regions  
Do smilingly revolt ; and who resist  
Are mock'd for valiant ignorance,  
And perish constant fools. Who is't can blame him ?  
Your enemies and his find something in him.

*Men.* We are all undone, unless  
The noble man have mercy.

*Com.* Who shall ask it ?  
The tribunes cannot do't for shame ; the people



Deserve such pity of him as the wolf 110  
Does of the shepherds : for his best friends, if they  
Should say ' Be good to Rome,' they charged him even  
As those should do that had deserved his hate,  
And therein show'd like enemies.

*Men.*

'Tis true :

If he were putting to my house the brand  
That should consume it, I have not the face  
To say ' Beseech you, cease.' You have made fair hands,  
You and your crafts ! you have crafted fair !

*Com.*

You have brought

A trembling upon Rome, such as was never  
So incapable of help.

*Both Tri.*

Say not we brought it.

120

*Men.* How ! Was it we ? we loved him ; but, like beasts  
And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,  
Who did hoot him out o' the city.

*Com.*

But I fear

They'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,  
The second name of men, obeys his points  
As if he were his officer : desperation  
Is all the policy, strength and defence,  
That Rome can make against them.

*Enter a troop of Citizens.*

*Men.*

Here come the clusters.

And is Aufidius with him ? You are they 130  
That made the air unwholesome, when you cast  
Your stinking greasy caps in hooting at  
Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming ;  
And not a hair upon a soldier's head  
Which will not prove a whip : as many coxcombs  
As you threw caps up will he tumble down,  
And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter ;  
If he could burn us all into one coal,  
We have deserved it.

*Citizens.* Faith, we hear fearful news.

*First Cit.*

For mine own part,

When I said, banish him, I said, 'twas pity.

140

*Sec. Cit.* And so did I.

*Third Cit.* And so did I ; and, to say the truth, so did very many of us : that we did, we did for the best ; and though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet it was against our will.

*Com.* Ye 're goodly things, you voices !

*Men.*

You have made

Good work, you and your cry ! Shall 's to the Capitol ?

*Com.* O, ay, what else ? [*Exeunt Cominius and Menenius.*]

*Sic.* Go, masters, get you home ; be not dismay'd :

These are a side that would be glad to have

150

This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,

And show no sign of fear.

*First Cit.* The gods be good to us ! Come, masters, let 's home. I ever said we were i' the wrong when we banished him.

*Sec. Cit.* So did we all. But, come, let 's home.

[*Exeunt Citizens.*]

*Bru.* I do not like this news.

*Sic.* Nor I.

*Bru.* Let 's to the Capitol. Would half my wealth  
Would buy this for a lie !

*Sic.*

Pray, let us go.

[*Exeunt.* 160]

SCENE VII. *A camp, at a small distance from Rome.*

*Enter AUFIDIUS and his Lieutenant.*

*Auf.* Do they still fly to the Roman ?

*Lieu.* I do not know what witchcraft 's in him, but  
Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat,  
Their talk at table, and their thanks at end ;  
And you are darken'd in this action, sir,  
Even by your own.

*Auf.* I cannot help it now,  
Unless, by using means, I lame the foot  
Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,  
Even to my person, than I thought he would  
When first I did embrace him : yet his nature 10  
In that's no changeling ; and I must excuse  
What cannot be amended.

*Lieu.* Yet I wish, sir,—  
I mean for your particular,—you had not  
Join'd in commission with him ; but either  
Had borne the action of yourself, or else  
To him had left it solely.

*Auf.* I understand thee well ; and be thou sure,  
When he shall come to his account, he knows not  
What I can urge against him. Although it seems,  
And so he thinks, and is no less apparent 20  
To the vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,  
And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state,  
Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon  
As draw his sword ; yet he hath left undone  
That which shall break his neck or hazard mine,  
Whene'er we come to our account.

*Lieu.* Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry Rome ?

*Auf.* All places yield to him ere he sits down ;  
And the nobility of Rome are his :  
The senators and patricians love him too : 30  
The tribunes are no soldiers ; and their people  
Will be as rash in the repeal, as hasty  
To expel him thence. I think he'll be to Rome  
As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it  
By sovereignty of nature. First he was  
A noble servant to them ; but he could not  
Carry his honours even : whether 'twas pride,  
Which out of daily fortune ever taints  
The happy man ; whether defect of judgement,  
To fail in the disposing of those chances 40

Which he was lord of ; or whether nature,  
Not to be other than one thing, not moving  
From the casque to the cushion, but commanding peace  
Even with the same austerity and garb  
As he controll'd the war ; but one of these—  
As he hath spices of them all, not all,  
For I dare so far free him—made him fear'd,  
So hated, and so banish'd : but he has a merit,  
To choke it in the utterance. So our virtues  
Lie in the interpretation of the time : -50  
And power, unto itself most commendable,  
Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair  
To extol what it hath done.  
One fire drives out one fire ; one nail, one nail ;  
Rights by rights falter, strengths by strengths do fail.  
Come, let's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,  
Thou art poor'st of all ; then shortly art thou mine. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V.

SCENE I. *Rome. A public place.*

*Enter MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS, and others.*

*Men.* No, I'll not go : you hear what he hath said  
Which was sometime his general ; who loved him  
In a most dear particular. He call'd me father :  
But what o' that ? Go, you that banish'd him ;  
A mile before his tent fall down, and knee  
The way into his mercy : nay, if he coy'd  
To hear Cominius speak, I'll keep at home.

*Com.* He would not seem to know me.

*Men.*

Do you hear ?

*Com.* Yet one time he did call me by my name :  
I urged our old acquaintance, and the drops  
That we have bled together. Coriolanus



He would not answer to : forbad all names ;  
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,  
Till he had forged himself a name o' the fire  
Of burning Rome.

*Men.* Why, so : you have made good work !  
A pair of tribunes that have wreck'd fair Rome,  
To make coals cheap,—a noble memory !

*Com.* I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon  
When it was less expected : he replied,  
It was a bare petition of a state 20  
To one whom they had punish'd.

*Men.* Very well :  
Could he say less ?

*Com.* I offer'd to awaken his regard  
For's private friends : his answer to me was,  
He could not stay to pick them in a pile  
Of noisome musty chaff : he said 'twas folly,  
For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt,  
And still to nose the offence.

*Men.* - For one poor grain or two !  
I am one of those ; his mother, wife, his child,  
And this brave fellow too, we are the grains : 30  
You are the musty chaff ; and you are smelt  
Above the moon : we must be burnt for you.

*Sic.* Nay, pray, be patient : if you refuse your aid  
In this so never-needed help, yet do not  
Upbraid's with our distress. But, sure, if you  
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,  
More than the instant army we can make,  
Might stop our countryman.

*Men.* No, I'll not meddle.

*Sic.* Pray you, go to him.

*Men.* What should I do ?

*Bru.* Only make trial what your love can do 40  
For Rome, towards Marcius.

*Men.* Well, and say that Marcius

Return me, as Cominius is return'd,  
Unheard ; what then ?  
But as a discontented friend, grief-shot  
With his unkindness ? say 't be so ?

*Sic.* Yet your good will  
Must have that thanks from Rome, after the measure  
As you intended well.

*Men.* I'll undertake 't :  
I think he'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip  
And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.  
He was not taken well ; he had not dined :  
The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then  
We pout upon the morning, are unapt  
To give or to forgive ; but when we have stuff'd  
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood  
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls  
Than in our priest-like fasts : therefore I'll watch him  
Till he be dieted to my request,  
And then I'll set upon him.

50

*Bru.* You know the very road into his kindness,  
And cannot lose your way.

*Men.* Good faith, I'll prove him, 60  
Speed how it will. I shall ere long have knowledge  
Of my success.

[Exit.

*Com.* He'll never hear him.

*Sic.* Not ?

*Com.* I tell you, he does sit in gold, his eye  
Red as 'twould burn Rome ; and his injury  
The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him ;  
'Twas very faintly he said 'Rise ;' dismiss'd me  
Thus, with his speechless hand : what he would do,  
He sent in writing after me ; what he would not ;  
Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions :  
So that all hope is vain,  
Unless his noble mother, and his wife ;  
Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him

70

For mercy to his country. Therefore, let's hence,  
And with our fair entreaties haste them on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Entrance of the Volscian camp before Rome. Two  
Sentinels on guard.*

*Enter to them, MENENIUS.*

*First Sen.* Stay : whence are you ?

*Sec. Sen.* Stand, and go back.

*Men.* You guard like men ; 'tis well : but, by your leave,  
I am an officer of state, and come  
To speak with Coriolanus.

*First Sen.* From whence ?

*Men.* From Rome.

*First Sen.* You may not pass, you must return : our  
general  
Will no more hear from thence.

*Sec. Sen.* You'll see your Rome embraced with fire before  
You'll speak with Coriolanus.

*Men.* Good my friends,  
If you have heard your general talk of Rome,  
And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks, 10  
My name hath touch'd your ears : it is Menenius.

*First Sen.* Be it so ; go back : the virtue of your name  
Is not here passable.

*Men.* I tell thee, fellow,  
Thy general is my lover : I have been  
The book of his good acts, whence men have read  
His fame unparallel'd, haply amplified ;  
For I have ever magnified my friends,  
Of whom he's chief, with all the size that verity  
Would without lapsing suffer : nay, sometimes,  
Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground, 20  
I have tumbled past the throw : and in his praise  
Have almost stamp'd the leasing : therefore, fellow,

I must have leave to pass.

*First Sen.* Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf as you have uttered words in your own, you should not pass here ; no, though it were as virtuous to lie as to live chastely. Therefore, go back.

*Men.* Prithee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius, always factionary on the party of your general.

*Sec. Sen.* Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say you have, I am one that, telling true under him, must say, you cannot pass. Therefore, go back. 32

*Men.* Has he dined, canst thou tell ? for I would not speak with him till after dinner.

*First Sen.* You are a Roman, are you ?

*Men.* I am, as thy general is.

*First Sen.* Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you, when you have pushed out your gates the very defender of them, and, in a violent popular ignorance, given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a decayed dotant as you seem to be ? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in, with such weak breath as this ? No, you are deceived ; therefore, back to Rome, and prepare for your execution : you are condemned, our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

*Men.* Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

*First Sen.* Come, my captain knows you not. 50

*Men.* I mean, thy general.

*First Sen.* My general cares not for you. Back, I say, go ; lest I let forth your half-pint of blood ; back,—that's the utmost of your having : back.

*Men.* Nay, but, fellow, fellow,—

*Enter CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.*

*Cor.* What's the matter ?



*Men.* Now, you companion, I'll say an errand for you : you shall know now that I am in estimation ; you shall perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office me from my son Coriolanus : guess, but by my entertainment with him, if thou standest not i' the state of hanging, or of some death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering ; behold now presently, and swoon for what's to come upon thee. [*To Cor.*] The glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy particular prosperity, and love thee no worse than thy old father Menenius does ! O my son, my son ! thou art preparing fire for us ; look thee, here's water to quench it. I was hardly moved to come to thee ; but being assured none but myself could move thee, I have been blown out of your gates with sighs ; and conjure thee to pardon Rome, and thy petitionary countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath, and turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here,—this, who, like a block, hath denied my access to thee.

*Cor.* Away !

*Men.* How ! away !

*Cor.* Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs  
Are servanted to others : though I owe  
My revenge properly, my remission lies  
In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,  
Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison, rather 80  
Than pity note how much. Therefore, be gone.  
Mine ears against your suits are stronger than  
Your gates against my force. Yet, for I loved thee,  
Take this along ; I writ it for thy sake, [*Gives a letter.*]  
And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,  
I will not hear thee speak. This man, Aufidius,  
Was my beloved in Rome : yet thou behold'st !

*Auf.* You keep a constant temper.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus and Aufidius.*]

*First Sen.* Now, sir, is your name Menenius ?

*Sec. Sen.* 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power : you know the way home again. 91

*First Sen.* Do you hear how we are shent for keeping your greatness back?

*Sec. Sen.* What cause, do you think, I have to swoon?

*Men.* I neither care for the world nor your general: for such things as you, I can scarce think there's any, ye're so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself fears it not from another: let your general do his worst. For you, be that you are, long; and your misery increase with your age! I say to you, as I was said to, Away! [*Erit.*]

*First Sen.* A noble fellow, I warrant him. 101

*Sec. Sen.* The worthy fellow is our general: he's the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken. [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE III. *The tent of Coriolanus*

*Enter CORIOLANUS, AUFIDIUS, and others.*

*Cor.* We will before the walls of Rome to-morrow  
Set down our host. My partner in this action,  
You must report to the Volscian lords, how plainly  
I have borne this business.

*Auf.* Only their ends  
You have respected; stopp'd your ears against  
The general suit of Rome; never admitted  
A private whisper, no, not with such friends  
That thought them sure of you.

*Cor.* This last old man,  
Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to Rome,  
Loved me above the measure of a father;  
Nay, godded me, indeed. Their latest refuge  
Was to send him; for whose old love I have,  
Though I show'd sourly to him, once more offer'd  
The first conditions, which they did refuse  
And cannot now accept; to grace him only  
That thought he could do more, a very little  
I have yielded to: fresh embassies and suits,

Nor from the state nor private friends, hereafter  
Will I lend ear to. Ha ! what shout is this ? [*Shout within.*  
Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow 20  
In the same time 'tis made ? I will not.

*Enter, in mourning habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, leading young  
MARCIUS, VALERIA, and Attendants.*

My wife comes foremost ; then the honour'd mould  
Wherein this trunk was framed, and in her hand  
The grandchild to her blood. But, out, affection !  
All bond and privilege of nature, break !  
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.  
What is that curt'sy worth ? or those doves' eyes,  
Which can make gods forsworn ? I melt, and am not  
Of stronger earth than others. My mother bows ;  
As if Olympus to a molehill should 30  
In supplication nod : and my young boy  
Hath an aspect of intercession, which  
Great nature cries 'Deny not.' Let the Volscies  
Plough Rome, and harrow Italy : I'll never  
Be such a gosling to obey instinct, but stand,  
As if a man were author of himself  
And knew no other kin.

*Vir.* My lord and husband !

*Cor.* These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome.

*Vir.* The sorrow that delivers us thus changed  
Makes you think so.

*Cor.* Like a dull actor now, 40  
I have forgot my part, and I am out,  
Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,  
Forgive my tyranny ; but do not say  
For that 'Forgive our Romans.' O, a kiss  
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge !  
Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss  
I carried from thee, dear ; and my true lip  
Hath virgin'd it e'er since. You gods ! I prate,

And the most noble mother of the world  
Leave unsaluted : sink, my knee, i' the earth ; [*Kneels.* 50  
Of thy deep duty more impression show  
Than that of common sons.

*Vol.* O, stand up blest !  
Whilst, with no softer cushion than the flint,  
I kneel before thee ; and improperly  
Show duty, as mistaken all this while  
Between the child and parent. [*Kneels.*

*Cor.* What is this ?  
Your knees to me ? to your corrected son ?  
Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach  
Fillip the stars ; then let the mutinous winds  
Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun ; 60  
Murdering impossibility, to make  
What cannot be, slight work.

*Vol.* Thou art my warrior ;  
I help to frame thee. Do you know this lady ?

*Cor.* The noble sister of Publicola,  
The moon of Rome, chaste as the icicle  
That's curded by the frost from purest snow  
And hangs on Dian's temple : dear Valeria !

*Vol.* This is a poor epitome of yours,  
Which by the interpretation of full time  
May show like all yourself.

*Cor.* The god of soldiers, 70  
With the consent of supreme Jove, inform  
Thy thoughts with nobleness ; that thou mayst prove  
To shame invulnerable, and stick i' the wars  
Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,  
And saving those that eye thee !

*Vol.* Your knee, sirrah.

*Cor.* That's my brave boy !

*Vol.* Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,  
Are suitors to you.

*Cor.* I beseech you, peace :



Or, if you 'ld ask, remember this before :  
The things I have forsworn to grant may never 80  
Be held by you denials. Do not bid me  
Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate  
Again with Rome's mechanics : tell me not  
Wherein I seem unnatural : desire not  
To allay my rages and revenges with  
Your colder reasons.

*Vol.* O, no more, no more !  
You have said you will not grant us any thing ;  
For we have nothing else to ask, but that  
Which you deny already : yet we will ask ;  
That, if we fail in our request, the blame 90  
May hang upon your hardness : therefore hear us.

*Cor.* Aufidius, and you Volscies, mark ; for we'll  
Hear nought from Rome in private. Your request ?

*Vol.* Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment  
And state of bodies would bewray what life  
We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself  
How more unfortunate than all living women  
Are we come hither : since that thy sight, which should  
Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,  
Constrains them weep and shake with fear and sorrow ; 100  
Making the mother, wife and child to see  
The son, the husband and the father tearing  
His country's bowels out. And to poor we  
Thine enmity's most capital : thou barr'st us  
Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort  
That all but we enjoy : for how can we,  
Alas, how can we for our country pray,  
Whereeto we are bound, together with thy victory,  
Whereeto we are bound ? alack, or we must lose  
The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person, 110  
Our comfort in the country. We must find  
An evident calamity, though we had  
Our wish, which side should win : for either thou

Must, as a foreign recreant, be led  
With manacles thorough our streets, or else  
Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,  
And bear the palm for having bravely shed  
Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,  
I purpose not to wait on fortune till  
These wars determine : if I cannot persuade thee 120  
Rather to show a noble grace to both parts  
Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner  
March to assault thy country than to tread—  
Trust to 't, thou shalt not—on thy mother's womb,  
That brought thee to this world.

*Vir.* Ay, and on mine,  
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name  
Living to time.

*Young Mar.* A' shall not tread on me ;  
I'll run away till I am bigger, but then I'll fight.

*Cor.* Not of a woman's tenderness to be,  
Requires nor child nor woman's face to see. 130  
I have sat too long. [*Rising.*

*Vol.* Nay, go not from us thus.  
If it were so that our request did tend  
To save the Romans, thereby to destroy  
The Volscies whom you serve, you might condemn us,  
As poisonous of your honour : no ; our suit  
Is, that you reconcile them : while the Volscies  
May say 'This mercy we have show'd ;' the Romans,  
'This we received ;' and each in either side  
Give the all-hail to thee, and cry 'Be blest  
For making up this peace !' Thou know'st, great son, 140  
The end of war's uncertain, but this certain,  
That, if you conquer Rome, the benefit  
Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name,  
Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses ;  
Whose chronicle thus writ : 'The man was noble,  
But with his last attempt he wiped it out ;

Destroy'd his country, and his name remains  
To the ensuing age abhorr'd.' Speak to me, son :  
Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour,  
To imitate the graces of the gods ; 150  
To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' the air,  
And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt  
That should but rive an oak. Why dost not speak ?  
Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man  
Still to remember wrongs ? Daughter, speak you :  
He cares not for your weeping. Speak thou, boy :  
Perhaps thy childishness will move him more  
Than can our reasons. There's no man in the world  
More bound to 's mother ; yet here he lets me prate  
Like one i' the stocks. Thou hast never in thy life 160  
Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy,  
When she, poor hen, fond of no second brood,  
Has cluck'd thee to the wars and safely home,  
Loaden with honour. Say my request's unjust,  
And spurn me back : but if it be not so,  
Thou art not honest ; and the gods will plague thee,  
That thou restrain'st from me the duty which  
To a mother's part belongs. He turns away :  
Down, ladies ; let us shame him with our knees.  
To his surname Coriolanus 'longs more pride 170  
Than pity to our prayers. Down : an end ;  
This is the last : so we will home to Rome,  
And die among our neighbours. Nay, behold 's :  
This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,  
But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship,  
Does reason our petition with more strength  
Than thou hast to deny't. Come, let us go :  
This fellow had a Volscian to his mother ;  
His wife is in Corioli and his child  
Like him by chance. Yet give us our despatch : 180  
I am hush'd until our city be afire,  
And then I'll speak a little. [*He holds her by the hand, silent.*]

*Cor.*

O mother, mother !

What have you done ? Behold, the heavens do ope,

The gods look down, and this unnatural scene

They laugh at. O my mother, mother ! O !

You have won a happy victory to Rome ;

But, for your son,—believe it, O, believe it,

Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,

If not most mortal to him. But, let it come.

Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,

190

I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,

Were you in my stead, say would you have heard

A mother less ? or granted less, Aufidius ?

*Auf.* I was moved withal.*Cor.*

I dare be sworn you were :

And, sir, it is no little thing to make

Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,

What peace you'll make, advise me : for my part,

I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you ; and pray you,

Stand to me in this cause O mother ! wife !

*Auf* [*Aside.*] I am glad thou hast set thy mercy and thy  
honour

200

At difference in thee : out of that I'll work

Myself a former fortune.

[*The Ladies make signs to Coriolanus.*]*Cor.*

Ay, by and by ;

[*To Volumnia, Virgilia, &c.*]

But we will drink together ; and you shall bear

A better witness back than words, which we,

On like conditions, will have counter-seal'd.

Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve

To have a temple built you : all the swords

In Italy, and her confederate arms,

Could not have made this peace.

[*Exeunt.* 209]



SCENE IV. *Rome. A public place.**Enter MENENIUS and SICINIUS.*

*Men.* See you yon coign o' the Capitol, yon corner-stone ?

*Sic.* Why, what of that ?

*Men.* If it be possible for you to displace it with your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him. But I say there is no hope in't : our throats are sentenced and stay upon execution.

*Sic.* Is't possible that so short a time can alter the condition of a man ?

*Men.* There is differency between a grub and a butterfly ; yet your butterfly was a grub. This Marcius is grown from man to dragon : he has wings ; he's more than a creeping thing.

12

*Sic.* He loved his mother dearly.

*Men.* So did he me : and he no more remembers his mother now than an eight-year-old horse. The tartness of his face sours ripe grapes : when he walks, he moves like an engine, and the ground shrinks before his treading : he is able to pierce a corslet with his eye ; talks like a knell, and his hum is a battery. He sits in his state, as a thing made for Alexander. What he bids be done is finished with his bidding. He wants nothing of a god but eternity and a heaven to throne in.

22

*Sic.* Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

*Men.* I paint him in the character. Mark what mercy his mother shall bring from him : there is no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger ; that shall our poor city find : and all this is long of you.

*Sic.* The gods be good unto us !

*Men.* No, in such a case the gods will not be good unto us. When we banished him, we respected not them ; and, he returning to break our necks, they respect not us.

31

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house :  
The plebeians have got your fellow-tribune  
And hale him up and down, all swearing, if  
The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,  
They'll give him death by inches.

*Enter a second Messenger.*

*Sic.* What's the news ?

*Sec. Mess.* Good news, good news ; the ladies have prevailed,

The Volscians are dislodged, and Marcius gone :  
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,  
No, not the expulsion of the Tarquins.

*Sic.* Friend, 40

Art thou certain this is true ? is it most certain ?

*Sec. Mess.* As certain as I know the sun is fire :  
Where have you lurk'd, that you make doubt of it ?  
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide,  
As the recomforted through the gates. Why, hark you !

[*Trumpets ; hautboys ; drums beat ; all together.*

The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries and fifes,  
Tabors and cymbals and the shouting Romans,  
Make the sun dance. Hark you ! [A shout within.

*Men.* This is good news :

I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia  
Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians, 50  
A city full ; of tribunes, such as you,  
A sea and land full. You have pray'd well to-day :  
This morning for ten thousand of your throats  
I'd not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy !

[*Music still, with shouts.*

*Sic.* First, the gods bless you for your tidings ; next,  
Accept my thankfulness.

*Sec. Mess.* Sir, we have all

Great cause to give great thanks.

*Sic.*

They are near the city ?

*Sec. Mess.* Almost at point to enter.

*Sic.*

*Alas !*

We will meet them,

And help the joy.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *The same. A place near the gate.*

*Enter two Senators with VOLUMNIA, VALERIA, &c., passing over the stage, followed by Polixenus, and others.*

*First Sen.* Behold our patroness, the life of Rome !

Call all your tribes together, praise the gods

And make triumphant fires ; strew flowers before them :

Unshout the noise that banish'd Marcius,

Repeal him with the welcome of his mother ;

Cry ' Welcome, ladies, welcome ! '

*All.*

Welcome, ladies,

Welcome ! [*A flourish with drums and trumpets.* *Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Antium. A public place.*

*Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, with Attendants.*

*Auf.* Go tell the lords o' the city I am here :

Deliver them this paper : having read it,

Bid them repair to the market-place ; where I,

Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,

Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse

The city ports by this hath enter'd and

Intends to appear before the people, hoping

To purge himself with words : dispatch. [*Exeunt Attendants.*]

*Enter three or four Conspirators of AUFIDIUS' faction.*

Most welcome !

*First Con.* How is it with our general ?

*Auf.*

Even so

10

As with a man by his own alms empoison'd,  
And with his charity slain.

*Sec. Con.*

Most noble

If you do hold the same intent wherein  
You wish'd us parties, we'll deliver you  
Of your great danger.

*Auf.*

I will tell :

We must proceed ~~to the~~ the people.

*Third Con.* The ~~will~~ will remain uncertain whilst

'Twixt you there ~~is~~ ~~is~~ ; but the fall of either  
Makes the survivor heir of all.

*Auf.*

I know it ;

20

And my pretext to strike at him admits  
A good construction. I raised him, and I pawn'd  
Mine honour for his truth : who being so heighten'd,  
He water'd his new plants with dews of flattery,  
Seducing so my friends ; and, to this end,  
He bow'd his nature, never known before  
But to be rough, unswayable and free.

*Third Con.* Sir, his stoutness

When he did stand for consul, which he lost  
By lack of stooping,—

*Auf.*

That I would have spoke of :

30

Being banish'd for 't, he came unto my hearth ;  
Presented to my knife his throat : I took him ;  
Made him joint-servant with me ; gave him way  
In all his own desires ; nay, let him choose  
Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,  
My best and freshest men, served his designments  
In mine own person ; help to reap the fame  
Which he did end all his ; and took some pride  
To do myself this wrong ; till, at the last,  
I seem'd his follower, not partner, and  
He waged me with his countenance, as if  
I had been mercenary.

40



*First Con.*

So he did, my lord :

The army marvell'd at it, and, in the last,  
When he had carried Rome and that we look'd  
For no less spoil than glory,—

*Auf.*

There was it :

For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him.

At a few drops of woman's rheum, which he

As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and honour

Of our great action : then, here shall he die.

And I'll renew me in his fall. But hark !

[*Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of  
the People.*]

*First Con.* Your reverendness you entreat like a post, 50

And had no welcome home, but he returns,

Splitting the air with noise.

*Sec. Con.*

And patient fools,

Whose children he hath slain, their best throats tear

With giving him glory.

*Third Con.*

Therefore, at your vantage,

Ere he express himself, or move the people

With what he would say, let him feel your sword,

Which we will second. When he lies along,

After your way his tale pronounced shall bury

His reasons with his body.

*Auf.*

Say no more :

Here come the lords.

60

*Enter the Lords of the city.*

*All the Lords.* You are most welcome home.

*Auf.*

I have not deserved it.

But, worthy lords, have you with heed perused

What I have written to you ?

*Lords.*

We have.

*First Lord.*

And grieve to hear't.

What faults he made before the last, I think

Might have found easy fines : but there to end  
Where he was to begin and give away  
The benefit of our levies, answering us  
With our own charge, making a treaty where  
There was a yielding,—this admits no excuse.

*Auf.* He approaches : you shall hear him.

70

*Enter CORIOLANUS, marching with drum and colours ;  
Commoners being with him.*

*Cor.* Hail, lords ! I am return'd your soldier,  
No more infected with my country's love  
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting  
Under your great command. You are to know  
That prosperously I have attempted and  
With bloody passage led your wars even to  
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home  
Do more than counterpoise a full third part  
The charges of the action. We have made peace  
With no less honour to the Antiates  
Than shame to the Romans : and we here deliver,  
Subscribed by the consuls and patricians,  
Together with the seal o' the senate, what  
We have compounded on.

80

*Auf.* Read it not, noble lords ;  
But tell the traitor in the high'st degree  
He hath abused your powers.

*Cor.* Traitor ! how now !

*Auf.* Ay, traitor, Marcius !

*Cor.* Marcius !

*Auf.* Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius : dost thou think  
I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name  
Coriolanus in Corioli ?

90

You lords and heads o' the state, perfidiously  
He has betray'd your business, and given up,  
For certain drops of salt, your city Rome,

I say 'your city,' to his wife and mother ;  
 Breaking his oath and resolution like  
 A twist of rotten silk, never admitting  
 Counsel o' the war, but at his nurse's tears  
 He whined and roar'd away your victory,  
 That pages blush'd at him and men of heart  
 Look'd wondering each at other.

*Cor.* Hear'st thou, Mars? 100

*Auf.* Name not the god, thou boy of tears !

*Cor.* Ha !

*Auf.* No more.

*Cor.* Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart  
 Too great for what contains it. Boy ! O slave !  
 Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever  
 I was forced to scold. Your judgements, my grave  
 lords,

Must give this cur the lie : and his own notion—  
 Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him ; that  
 Must bear my beating to his grave—shall join  
 To thrust the lie unto him.

*First Lord.* Peace, both, and hear me speak.

*Cor.* Cut me to pieces, Volscies ; men and lads,  
 Stain all your edges on me. Boy ! false hound !  
 If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,  
 That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I  
 Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli :  
 Alone I did it. Boy !

*Auf.* Why, noble lords,

Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,  
 Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,  
 'Fore your own eyes and ears ?

*All Consp.* Let him die for't. 120

*All the People.* 'Tear him to pieces.' 'Do it presently.'  
 'He killed my son.' 'My daughter.' 'He killed my cousin  
 Marcus.' 'He killed my father.'

*Sec. Lord.* Peace, ho ! no outrage : peace !

The man is noble and his fame folds-in  
This orb o' the earth. His last offences to us  
Shall have judicious hearing. Stand, Aufidius,  
And trouble not the peace.

*Cor.* O that I had him,  
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe,  
To use my lawful sword !

*Auf.* Insolent villain ! 130

*All Consp.* Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him !

[*The Conspirators draw, and kill Coriolanus :  
Aufidius stands on his body.*]

*Lords.* Hold, hold, hold, hold !

*Auf.* My noble masters, hear me speak.

*First Lord.* O Tullus,—

*Sec. Lord.* Thou hast done a deed whereat valour will  
weep.

*Third Lord.* Tread not upon him. Masters all, be quiet ;  
Put up your swords.

*Auf.* My lords, when you shall know—as in this  
rage,

Provoked by him, you cannot—the great danger  
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice  
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours  
To call me to your senate, I'll deliver 140  
Myself your loyal servant, or endure  
Your heaviest censure.

*First Lord.* Bear from hence his body ;  
And mourn you for him : let him be regarded  
As the most noble corse that ever herald  
Did follow to his urn.

*Sec. Lord.* His own impatience  
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.  
Let's make the best of it.

*Auf.* My rage is gone ;  
And I am struck with sorrow. Take him up.  
Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers ; I'll be one.



Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully : 150  
Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he  
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,  
Which to this hour bewail the injury,  
Yet he shall have a noble memory.

Assist.

*[Exeunt, bearing the body of Coriolanus.  
A dead march sounded.]*

## NOTES.

### ACT I. SCENE I.

1. **proceed any further**, take any further action in the matter.

3. **to die .. famish?** to die a violent death in combat rather than slowly perish of famine?

5, 6. **Caius Marcius ... people**, *sc.* in wishing that no consideration should be shown them in their distress; **chief enemy**, for the omission of the Article, see Abb. § 84.

8, 9. **we 'll have ... price**, and, sure enough, we shall be able to buy corn as cheaply as we could wish: **Is 't a verdict?** have you made up your minds on that point?

13. **good**, *sc.* in point of wealth; *cp.* *M. V. i. 3. 16*, "my meaning in saying he is a *good* man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient": **What authority ... us**, that which is to those in authority, the patricians, something over and above what they can profitably use for their wants, would relieve our distress.

14. **but the superfluity**, merely that which they can make no use of themselves: **while it were wholesome**, before it should become so musty as to be useless for food; for the subjunctive used indefinitely after a relative conjunction, see Abb. § 367.

15. **we might ... humanely**, we might suppose that they were prompted by feelings of humanity in relieving us.

16. **too dear**, not worth the keeping alive at such a cost; *cp.* *M. N. D. i. 1. 249*, "If I have thanks, it is a *dear* expense."

16, 7. **the object of our misery**, the spectacle of our suffering.

17, 8. **is as ... abundance**, serves, by way of contrast, to make them mindful of their own well-fed condition; each particular of our want corresponding to some particular of their abundance.

18. **our sufferance ... them**, our misery adds something in the way of zest to their prosperity; for **sufferance**, = suffering, *cp.* *Lear, iii. 6. 113*, "But then the mind much *sufferance* doth

o'erskip." Shakespeare also uses it for *patience, pain, loss, and permission.*

18. 9. **Let us ... rakes.** Warburton points out that **pikes** was an old term for *forks, i.e.* pitch-forks, the two-pronged instrument with which hay, straw, etc., was *picked*, or pitched, on to a heap. So, below, i. 1. 190, we have, "As I could *pick* my lance," *i.e.* pitch my lance. In **rakes**, the comparison is to the bones of an animal showing below the skin as distinctly as the teeth of a rake; a comparison made clear by a passage from *A Pleasant Dispute between a Coach and a Sedan*, 1636, quoted by Malone on *Lear*, iii. 6. 78, ... "The dogges are *as lean as rakes*; you may tell all their ribbes lying be the fire."

19, 20. **for the gods ... revenge.** *I say ere we become rakes*, for, as heaven is my witness, it is the dread of starvation, not the desire for vengeance, which prompts my angry words.

21. **proceed ... against**, take action against; not in the legal sense of the phrase, but by demanding that he should be given up to their vengeance.

23. **he's a very ... commonalty**, he worries us, the common people, with all the fierceness of a dog worrying sheep.

24. **Consider you**, do you bear in mind?

26, 7. **Very well**, I do bear it in mind: **and could ... proud**, and I should be quite ready to give him full credit for those services, if it were not that he finds his own recompense for them in the opportunity they afford him for treating us with such disdain; for **report**, cp. *W. T.* v. 2. 162, "I humbly beseech you, sir, to pardon me all the faults I have committed to your worship and to *give me your good report* to the prince my master"; *Cymb.* ii. 3. 88, "There is gold for you; *sell me your good report.*"

29, 30. **what he hath ... end**, those famous actions he has performed, he performed only in order that he might be able to make them an excuse for indulging in his pride: **what**, Abbott (§ 252) remarks that this pronoun when used relatively "generally stands before its antecedent, ... thereby indicating its interrogative force, though the position of the verb is altered to suit a statement instead of a question."

30. **soft-conscienced men**, men who allow their feelings to prevail over their judgement.

31. **it, &c.** his behaving so bravely.

31, 2. **he did it ... proud**, his motives were partly to give pleasure to his mother by the reputation he thus gained, and partly to give pleasure to himself by being able to indulge his pride; for the transposition of **partly**, see Abb. § 420. Plutarch says, "As for the other, the only respect that made them valiant, was that they hoped to have honour; but touching Martius, the

only thing that made him to love honour was the joy he saw his mother did take of him. For he thought, nothing made him so happy and honourable, as that his mother might hear everybody praise and commend him" (Skeat, *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, p. 4).

32, 3. **even ... virtue**, in no less degree than his valour; **virtue**, in the sense of the Lat. *virtus*, valour, manly excellence, from *vir*, a man.

34, 5. **What he ... him**, that which, being constitutional with him, he cannot help, you impute to him as a vice; cp. *Hamlet* i. 4. 24-6, "That for some vicious mole of nature in them, As, in their birth—wherein they are not guilty, Since nature cannot choose his origin."

35. **You must ... covetous**, it is impossible, with any justice, to accuse him, as you may justly accuse the rest of the patricians, of avarice.

36, 7. **I need ... accusations**, I still have plenty of other charges which I may justly bring against him.

37. **he hath ... repetition**, he has more than enough faults for one to grow weary in enumerating them; for **repetition**, i.e. mention, not over and over again, but mention of each particular fault, cp. *K. J.* ii. i. 197, "It ill beseems their presence to cry aim To these ill-tuned *repetitions*."

38. **The other side**, "The people had by this time retired to the Mons Sacer, which was about three miles from the city along the Via Nomentana. The other side would therefore be the part beyond the Tiber. But in all probability Shakespeare had in his mind the topography of London and not of Rome, and the Tower was to him the Capitol" (Wright).

39. **is risen**, is up in arms: **prating**, idly chattering: **the Capitol**, the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus at Rome, said to have derived its name from a human head (*caput*) being discovered in digging its foundation. Begun by Tarquinius Priscus and finished by Tarquinius Superbus, it was three times burnt down and as often rebuilt. Here the consuls upon entering upon their office offered sacrifice and took their vows; and hither the victorious general, who entered the city in triumph, was carried in his triumphal car to return thanks to the Father of the gods.

41. **Soft!** wait awhile!

STAGE DIRECTION. **Menenius Agrippa**, consul, B.C. 503, conquered the Sabines. Plutarch speaks of him as among "the pleasantest old men, and the most acceptable to the people" sent as "chief man of the message from the Senate" to the plebeians on their retirement to Mons Sacer.



44. **He's ... enough**, though a patrician, he has plenty of honesty in him.

46. **in hand** ? about to be undertaken ?

47. **bats**, bludgeons, cudgels ; **The matter** ? what is the business you are engaged in ?

49. **inkling**, hint, intimation ; “ a verbal substantive formed from the M. E. verb *incle* ... a frequentative verb from a base *ink-*, to murmur, mutter ” ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*) : **this fortnight**, for the whole of the two last weeks.

50. **which now**, and what those intentions were, we will now, etc.

51. **strong**, *sc.* in their offensiveness ; cp. *A.W.* v. 2. 5, “ but I am now, sir, muddled in fortune's mood, and smell somewhat *strong* of her strong displeasure.”

53. **masters**, a term of respect, though frequently as a mere courtesy without any idea of inferiority in the speaker.

54. **undo**, ruin.

56. **most charitable care**, most anxious consideration for your welfare.

57. **For**, as regards.

58. **Your suffering ... dearth**, the misery you have been put to by this scarcity of corn.

60. **the Roman state**, the governing powers of Rome.

60-3. **whose course ... impediment**, whose course will go forward in the direction it has marked out for itself, easily breaking down all hindrances, though ten thousand times more stubborn than any you can place in its way : **Of more strong link**, more strongly linked together : **asunder**, literally *on sunder*, from A.S. *sundor*, adverb, asunder : **your impediment**, the impediment offered by you : **your**, used subjectively. Malone compares *Oth.* v. 2. 263, “ I have made my way through more *impediments* Than *twenty times your stop*.”

63-5. **For the dearth ... help**, as for the scarcity of which you complain, that is due to the will of the gods, not to the enmity of the Patricians, and for all help against it you must betake yourselves to your knees in prayer to the gods, not to your arms in defiance of the Patricians : **Alack**, alas ; according to Skeat, probably from *ah ! lak ! ah*, a loss !

66, 7. **You are ... you**, your misery is only hurrying you, in behaving in this manner, into worse misfortune.

68. **The helms o' the state**, those who are guiding the vessel of state.

69. **When you curse**, in cursing.

70. **True, indeed !** that's a pretty tale to tell us.

71, 2. **suffer us ... grain**, they are content to see us starve while all the time their garners are bursting with superabundance ; for **and**, used to give emphasis, cp. *Hamlet* i. 3. 62, "Those friends thou hast, *and* their adoption tried, Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel" ; and see Abb. § 95.

72, 3. **make edicts ... usurers**, they frame resolutions in favour of usury, whereby the exorbitant money-lenders are enabled to flourish. An edict was a rule promulgated by magistrates, more especially the prætors, upon their entry into office at the beginning of the year ; and when the custom of succeeding magistrates adopting the rules of their predecessors became common, these rules, or edicts, gradually constituted a large body of law. The edicts here complained of are such as gave the usurers greater facility of recovering their debts and imposing stringent terms upon borrowers.

73, 4. **repeal ... rich**, are day by day going further in repealing whatever acts serve as a protection against the rich ; **wholesome**, salutary in curbing the power of the wealthier classes : **more piercing statutes**, statutes of a more rigorous and cruel character.

75. **eat us not up**, do not make an end of us, kill us all off.

76. **and there's ... us**, and that is about all the love they can boast of feeling for us.

77-9 **Either ... folly**, when you have heard what I have to say, you will either have to confess that your words are words of the merest malice, or that you have laid yourself open to the charge of folly : **shall tell**, am about to tell, mean to tell ; the first person with **shall** denoting the determination of the speaker.

80. **tale, fable**.

82. **To stale ... more**, to make it a little more stale by repetition ; **stale** is Theobald's correction of *scale*, the reading of the folios. Grant White compares Massinger, *The Unnatural Combat*, iv. 2. 19, 20, "I'll not *stale* the jest By my relation."

83, 4. **think ... tale**, fancy that by telling us a fable you will be able to cheat us out of a belief in the humiliations we have endured ; **fob**, Ger. *foppen*, to jeer, banter, occurs in the form *fub*, in ii. *H. IV.* ii. 1. 37 ; Halliwell (*Arch. and Prov. Dict.*), gives to "*fub*, to put off, deceive. At marbles, an irregular mode of projecting the taw by an effort of the whole hand, instead of the thumb only." For **disgrace**, cp. *H. VIII.* iii. 2. 240, "How eagerly you follow my *disgraces*" : for **an**, see Abb. § 101.

85. **deliver, relate** : as frequently in Shakespeare.

87. **Rebell'd ... it**, it is usual, as in the text, to put a comma or a semicolon after **belly** ; but it seems probable that **Rebell'd** is

used for *rebell*ing or *being* in *rebell*ion, and that we should regard the whole line as a single clause.

88, 9. **That only ... body**, that it did nothing but remain in the centre of the body like a whirlpool into which all nourishment was sucked; for the transposition of **only**, see Abb. § 420; for **gulf**, cp. *Haml.* iii. 3. 16, "but, like a *gulf*, doth draw what's near it with it": **unactive**, inactive; for the difference between *un-*, and *in-*, in composition, see Abb. § 442.

90. **cupboard**ing, storing up as in a cupboard; a *cupboard* is properly a closet with shelves on which cups are ranged, then a closet in which anything is kept; **viand**, food; "the same as Ital. *vivanda*, victuals, food, eatables. — Lat. *uiuenda*, neuter plural, things to live on, provisions; considered as a feminine singular by a change common in Low Latin" (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*): **bearing**, enduring, undergoing.

91. **where**, whereas: **instruments**, including bodily and mental organs; cp. *J. C.* ii. 1. 66, "The genius and the mortal *instruments* Are then in council."

93. **mutually participate**, each sharing with the other in the common labour; the adjective **participate** is not elsewhere found in Shakespeare.

94. **appetite**, desires: **affection common**, inclinations shared by the whole body. For the transposition, see Abb. § 419.

97. **I shall tell you**, I am about to tell you (and was about to tell you when you so rudely interrupted me).

98. **Which ne'er ... lungs**, with a bitter smile, not one that came freely like a hearty laugh from the lungs; Delius compares *Cymb.* i. 6. 68, "whiles the jolly Briton—Your lord, I mean—laughs from's *free lungs*, Cries 'O, can my sides hold.'"

99, 100. **For ... speak**, for, let me tell you, in a fable, there is no greater impropriety in representing the belly as smiling than in representing it as speaking.

102. **envied his receipt**, were jealous of its receiving all the nourishment taken into the body: for **receipt**, = thing received, cp. *Lucr.* 703, "Drunken desire must vomit his *receipt*": **his**, its.

102-4. **even so ... you**, with no greater reason for their malignity than that which you bear towards our senators for being something different from yourselves.

104. **Your belly's answer?** come, don't delay, let us have this answer given by the belly of which you talk so much; for this colloquial use of **Your**, cp. *Haml.* iv. 3. 24, "*Your* worm is *your* only emperor for diet: *your* fat king and *your* lean beggar is but variable service"; and see Abb. § 221: here there



is also the emphasis of scorn. **What!** are you going to be bold enough to tell us that the belly could possibly have any sufficient answer to give?

105. **The kingly-crowned head**, the head which is to the body what the crown is to the king, the emblem of supremacy.

106. **The counsellor heart**, the heart from which we receive the dictates of wisdom.

108. **muniments**, instruments with which the body is furnished and armed; Lat. *munire*, to fortify.

109. **this our fabric**, this frame-work of our body made up of all these several parts and organs: **if that**, for the conjunctive affix, see Abb. § 287.

110. **'Fore me ... speaks!** my goodness! this *is* a fellow to talk! **'Fore me**, *i.e.* before me, in my presence, a petty adjuration, used in order to avoid the penalties of profane swearing, an attenuated form of "*fore God!*" which we have in *M.A.* ii. 3. 192.

111. **cormorant**, voracious: properly a voracious sea-bird, the *corvus marinus*, sea-crow.

112. **the sink o' the body**, which serves the same purpose in the body that a sink serves in a kitchen, etc., the refuse water being allowed to drain off through it; originally a place into which filth sinks, or in which it collects.

113. **agents**, instruments, organs; cp. *Macb.* i. 7. 80, "I am settled, and bend up Each *corporal agent* to this terrible feat."

115. 6. **If you'll ... awhile**, if for a moment or two you will show me a small amount of that quality of which your store is but slight, *viz.* patience. Though Shakespeare often uses **small** where we should use *little*, it is probable that but for the parenthesis he would not have written *a small Patience*.

117. **Note me**, for this dative, see Abb. § 220.

118. **Your**, colloquially, as in l. 104.

119. **Not rash like his accusers**, inferentially the rashness is attributed to the accusers of the senators.

120. **incorporate**, belonging to the same body as myself; cp. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 208, "As if our hands, our sides, voices and minds, Had been *incorporate*": and *incorpsed*, *Hamlet* iv. 7. 88, "As had he been *incorpsed* and demi-natured With the brave beast."

121. **general**, belonging equally to all parts of the body.

123. **the store-house and the shop**. Grant White points out that in modern English, as spoken in Great Britain, this expression sounds pleonastic, the two words being used in the same sense; whereas in America (as formerly in England) 'shop'



means the place where a thing is made, 'store' or 'storehouse,' the place where a thing is kept for sale.

124. **if you do remember**, said with a sort of sarcastic politeness, if you will be so good as to bethink yourselves for a moment, you will recall what you seem to have forgotten.

126. **Even ... brain**. Malone seems to be right when he says that **the seat o' the brain** is in apposition with, and descriptive of, **the heart**. He quotes a similar apologue from Camden's *Remains*, 1605, in which the bodily organs, having mutinied against the belly, at length find themselves unable to perform their functions, and "all with one accord desire *the advice of the heart*. *There Reason* laid open before them," etc. That the heart was once believed to be the seat of the understanding, there can be no doubt; and just above we have it spoken of as the *counsellor*. Others take **the heart** and **the seat o' the brain** as the two points to which the blood conveys the nourishment; in either case, **seat** will mean royal seat, throne, as frequently in Shakespeare, e.g. *H. V. i. l. 88*, *Cymb. i. l. 142*.

127-30. **And, through ... live**, and through the passages and chambers of the body the strongest nerves alike with the petty veins receive from me that adequate sustenance which gives them vigorous life: **cranks** are properly winding channels, ducts (cp. the verb in *i. H. IV. iii. l. 98*), but here in connection with **offices** they represent the passages running through a house by which food is brought from the kitchen, larder, etc. Cp. *Hamlet. i. 5. 67*, "The natural *gates and alleys of the body*"; and for **offices**, *R. II. i. 2. 69*, "But empty lodgings and unfurnish'd walls, unpeopled *offices*, untrodden stones"; *Tim. ii. 2. 167*, "When all our *offices* have been oppress'd With riotous feeders." By Shakespeare **nerve** is always used as = sinew, in accordance with the Gk. origin, *νεῦρον*, a sinew, tendon; but he seems also to have thought that they had some structural affinity to veins and arteries; cp. *Hamlet. i. 4. 82, 3*, "And makes each petty *artery* in this body As hardy as the Nemean lion's *nerve*."

130. **though that**, for the conjunctive affix, see Abb. § 287.

131. **this says ... me**,—i.e. this is the important point for you to notice.

132. **Ay, sir; well, well**, said with impatience; get on with this answer that the belly made.

133. **deliver out**, distribute, apportioning to each its proper share.

134. **Yet I can ... up**, yet I can produce a balance sheet showing how my account stands and proving that all, etc.: **audit**, literally, the hearing of an account rendered by stewards, etc., to those whose property they have in trust; cp. *Macbeth. i. 6. 27*,

"Your servants ever Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt, To make their *audit* at your highness' pleasure, Still to return your own."

135. **the flour**, the finer part of meal ; identical with *flower*.

136. **the bran**, the husk after the flour has been extracted.

137. **It was ... this?** it was a good answer, but how do you apply it to the circumstances?

140. **Their ... cares**, their wise deliberations and the concern they show for the people.

140, 1. **digest ... common**, with impartial consideration turn over in your mind how the public welfare stands : **weal**, "A.S. *wela*, from A.S. *wel*, well, adverb, the notion of condition being expressed by the nominal suffix *-a*" (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*). For **common**, = the common people, cp. below, iii. 1. 29, "Hath he not pass'd the noble and *the common?*" So, *the general*, *Hamlet*. ii. 2. 457, "'twas caviare to *the general*"; *M. M.* ii. 4. 27, "*The general*, subject to a well-wish'd king."

141. **you shall find**, you will necessarily find. We should now say either 'examine *and* you will find,' or '*if* you examine, you will find.'

143. **But it ... you**, which does not either originate in them, or at all events is made yours by them.

144. **no way**, in no way ; used adverbially ; see Abb. § 202.

147, 8. **For that, ... foremost**, because while you are one of the lowest, basest, poorest, among those who with such great wisdom have broken out into mutiny, you, like the great toe of the foot, thrust yourself most forward ; **foremost** is a double superlative, the O. E. original superlative of *fore* being *forma* : cp. *aftermost*, *furthermost*, etc.

149, 50. **Thou rascal ... vantage**, you worthless fellow, least fitted of all the herd to take the lead, put yourself at their head thinking to secure to yourself some personal advantage. Mason points out that **rascal** and **in blood** are terms of forestry, the former meaning a lean deer (and so one wanting in spirit), the latter full of animal vigour. Cp. i. *H. VI.* iv. 2. 48, 9, "If we be English deer, be then *in blood* ; Not *rascal*-like, to fall down with a pinch," i.e. as soon as bitten by a dog.

151. **make you ready**, make ready for yourselves, for your defence.

152. **Rome ... battle**, Rome and the vermin, like you, that infest her will soon be engaged in deadly struggle.

153. **The one ... bale**, one side or other must perish in the conflict ; **bale**, A.S. *bealu*, evil, misfortune ; not elsewhere used by

Shakespeare, though *baleful* occurs in *R. J.* ii. 3. 8, and repeatedly in *H. VI.* and *Timon*.

155. 6. **That ... scabs?** who in seeking to relieve the seditious irritation from which you are suffering, only make yourselves more loathsome objects than before? **the poor ... opinion**, this contemptible desire to make your miserable opinions heard; in *T. N.* ii. 5. 82, ii. *H. IV.* iii. 2. 296, *T. C.* ii. 1. 31, *scab* is used for scabby fellow, loathsome creature.

156. **We have ... word**, *i.e.* we might be sure beforehand of abuse from you.

158. **Beneath abhorring**, to a degree of baseness that no abhorrence could fitly express.

159, 60. **That like ... proud**, whom neither peace nor war satisfies, the latter terrifying you, the former only puffing you up with arrogance.

161. **Where**, in matters in which : **lions**, brave as lions : **hares**, timid as hares.

162. **foxes**, cunning as foxes : **geese**, stupid as geese.

162-4. **no surer ... sun**, of no more steadfastness, endurance, than a coal which quickly burns itself out if put upon ice, or than, etc.

164-6. **Your virtue ... it**, that in which you excel consists in exalting as a hero him whose vile actions have brought him to ruin, and in cursing that justice which has meted out his deserts to him; cp. *Leir*, ii. 2. 128, "got praises of the king For him attempting who was self-subdued." For the omission of the relative before **did**, see Abb. § 244.

166, 7. **Who deserves ... hate**, to deserve greatness is to deserve your hatred; the two things are identical. For **Who**, = he who, cp. *Mach.* i. 3. 109, "*Who* was the thane lives yet"; *A. C.* i. 2. 102, "*Who* tells me true, though in his tale lies death, I hear him as he flatter'd."

167-9. **and your ... evil**, and your inclinations are as the appetite of a sick man, who longs most for such food as would only make his malady worse; for **affections**, cp. ii. *H. IV.* ii. 3. 29, "In diet, in *affections* of delight."

170, 1. **swims ... rushes**, finds those favours to be leaden weights to drag him down instead of fins to bear him up in troubled waters, finds them as powerless to aid him in hewing his way through difficulties as rushes would be to cut down oaks.

171. **Hang ye ! Trust ye ?** curses on you ! do you fancy that any one in his senses would trust you ?

173. **your hate**, the object of your hatred.



174. **your garland**, your emblem of all that is glorious; cp. *A. C.* iv. 15. 64, "O, wither'd is *the garland* of the war," i.e. Antony is dead.

175. **several**, various; not here only, but all over the city.

177. **Under the gods**, next to the gods; as their vice-gerents on earth: **keep you in awe**, awe you into subjection: for **which**, less definite than *who*, see Abb. § 266.

178. **What's their seeking**, what is it they desire? **seeking**, a verbal noun.

179. **For corn ... rates**, their desire is to have corn supplied to them at such price as they may choose to fix: **whereof**, for with it; for **of** used of the instrument, see Abb. § 171.

180. **They say!** i.e. fancy paying any attention to what is said by creatures like them! with scornful emphasis on **They**.

181, 2. **They'll sit .. Capitol**, such fellows as they are sit at home by their own hearths and yet have the audacity to pretend a knowledge of the way in which state affairs are managed; **fire**, a dissyllable; **like**, likely.

183. **declines**, is falling from power: **side factions**, in their idle talk espouse one party or another; in iv. 2. 2, the verb is used intransitively: **give out**, proclaim as about to be made.

184. **Conjectural**, that have no other foundation than their own foolish guesses.

184-6. **making ... shoes**, imputing great power to those whom in their wonderful wisdom they are pleased to admire, and in equally wise imagination treading beneath their clumsy shoes those who are not fortunate enough to find a place in their liking; for **feebling**, cp. *K. J.* v. 2. 146, "Shall that victorious hand be *feebled* here?"

186. **They say ... enough!** Fancy their taking upon themselves to say, etc. Who in the world would be foolish enough to pay any heed to what *they* say?

187. **ruth**, mercy, tenderness of heart; cp. to *rue*, to be sorry for.

188-90. **And let me ... lance**, allow me to deal with them as they deserve to be dealt with and I'd butcher them till their mangled bodies made a pile as high as I could pitch my lance; **quarry**, a heap of slaughtered game. "Corrupted from O. F. *coree*, *curee*, the intestines of the slain animal; the part that was given to the hounds ... — Low Lat. *corata*, the intestines of the slain animal ... — Lat. *cor*, heart" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*); cp. *Macb.* iv. 3. 206, "the *quarry* of these murder'd deer"; **quarter'd**, hacked in pieces; used proleptically for which would



then be hacked, etc., *i.e.* by his blows ; **pick**, pitch ; cp. *H. VIII.* v. 4. 94, " I 'll *peck* you o'er the pales else."

191. **Nay, these ... persuaded**, nay, there is no need to thunder at them any further, for they have already seen enough to be pretty well convinced of the folly of their outbreak.

192. 3. **For though ... cowardly**, for though they are utterly destitute of that better part of valour, discretion, they have cowardice in abundance to teach them submission ; for **abundantly lack**, cp. *Hamlet* ii. 2. 202, " a *plentiful lack* of wisdom " ; for **passing**, surpassingly, egregiously, cp. *Oth.* i. 3. 160, *Hamlet* ii. 2. 427. In i. *H. IV.* v. 4. 121, Falstaff says, " The better part of valour is discretion " ; a saying now proverbial.

193. **I beseech you**, be good enough to tell me ; the phrase had not in Shakespeare's time the sense of urgent entreaty which it now carries.

194. **troop**, band ; used contemptuously, as we should now say, crew.

195. **an-hungry**, here *an-* is a corruption of the A.S. intensive *of* ; see Abb. § 24 : **sigh'd forth**, uttered in dismal accents.

196. **That hunger ... walls**, that nothing could restrain those who were starving : **that dogs must eat**, that even animals must have food, and will seize it if not given them.

198. **shreds**, fragments, odds and ends, of proverbial sayings ; literally a piece roughly cut off. Cp. *Hamlet* iii. 4. 102, " A king of *shreds* and patches."

200. **a petition granted**, a petition which they made being granted.

201. **To break ... generosity**, one calculated to humble the aristocracy to the dust ; **generosity**, the abstract for the concrete ; Lat. *generosus*, well-born ; cp. *M. M.* iv. 6. 13, " The *generous* and gravest citizens " ; *Oth.* iii. 3. 280, " The *generous* islanders By you invited, do attend your presence."

202. **And make ... pale**, and strike terror into the hearts of those who hitherto have boldly used the power entrusted to them : **threw their caps**, threw up their caps in exultation.

203. **As they would hang**, in such a manner as they would have done if they were about to, etc. " **As**, like *an*, appears to be (though it is not) used by Shakespeare for *as if* ... the *if* is implied in the subjunctive " ... (Abb. § 107) : **the horns o' the moon**, cp. *A. C.* iv. 12. 45, " Let me lodge Lichas *on the horns o' the moon*."

204. **Shouting their emulation**, each vying with the other as to who should proclaim his satisfaction the louder. Schmidt and Wright take **emulation** as envious contention, rivalry in a bad

sense ; but it is the joy at their triumph that the plebeians are noisily expressing.

205. **to defend ... wisdoms**, for the protection of these boors in the exercise of that wisdom with which they credit themselves.

206. **Of their own choice**, those tribunes to be chosen by themselves. Originally two in number, the tribunes were afterwards increased to five, and later on to ten, two for each of the five classes of plebeians.

207. **and I know not**— who the others were I have forgotten : *'s death*, (by) God's death, *i.e.* the crucifixion of Christ ; so, *'s blood*, by God's blood ; *'s life* by God's life ; *'s wounds*, or *zounds*, by God's wounds.

208, 9. **The rabble ... me**, I would have let them destroy the whole city rather than have yielded them this privilege ; for the ellipsis of *they should have* after **ere**, cp. i. 1. 233, "I'll lean upon one crutch and fight with t' other, *Ere stay behind* this business" ; **it**, the rabble.

210. **Win upon power**, gradually make an inroad upon the power wielded by the nobles. Grant White thinks that the rhythm and the sense of the passage hardly leave a doubt that we should read **win open power** ; but the text seems better to indicate the *gradual* process : **throw ... themes**, give birth to topics of larger importance. It seems tempting to read *throe forth*, as in *A. C.* iii. 7. 81, "With news the time's with labour, and *throes forth*, each minute, some."

211. **For ... arguing**, "for insurgents to debate upon" (Malone) ; the abstract for the concrete.

212. **fragments**, mere portions of men ; none of you worthy to be called a man ; cp. *T. C.* v. 1. 9, "From whence, *fragment?*", addressed to the miserable creature Thersites ; also Petruchio's abuse of the tailor, *T. S.* iv. 3. 107-9, "Thou liest, thou thread, thou thimble, Thou yard, three-quarters, half-yard, quarter, nail !"

214. **are in arms**, have taken up arms.

215, 6. **to vent ... superfluity**, to get rid of the worthless fellows of whom we have such superabundance. To **vent** is to sell, and the idea is that of getting rid to foreigners of goods not fit for home consumption, here of course by getting them killed off. Skeat (*Ety. Dict.*) quotes Bacon, *Life of Henry VII.* "The merchant-adventurers likewise ... did hold out bravely ; taking off the commodities ... though they lay dead upon their hands for want of *vent*" ; and Burnet, *Life of Hall*, "when he found ill money had been put into his hands, he would never suffer it to be *vented* again."

216. **our best elders**, our noble senators ; the *patres*, fathers of state.

217. 'tis true ... us, that which you lately told us (*sc.* that the Volscians are preparing to attack us) turns out to be true.

219. that will ... to 't, who will make it necessary for you to strain your efforts to the utmost; *cp.* *W. T.* i. 2. 16, "We are tougher, brother, Than you can put us to 't"; *M. M.* iii. 2. 101, "he puts transgression to 't."

220. I sin ... nobility, if envy is a sin, then I am guilty of that sin, for I do envy his nobleness of character.

221. but what, except that which.

222. only he, none other than he is; *he* for *him*; *cp.* *Ham.* i. 2. 104, "From the first corse till *he* that died to-day."

223. half ... world, one half of the world to the other half; by the ears, quarrelling; the metaphor is that of dogs seizing each other by the ears. So, *A. W.* i. 2. 1, "The Florentines and Senoys are by the ears."

224. Upon my party, taking my side of the quarrel; belonging to my half of the world.

225. Only ... him, was with him alone for my antagonist; for the transposition of *Only*, see *Abb.* § 420.

227. Attend upon, accompany as one of his subordinates.

229. constant, faithful to my promise.

231. stiff, *sc.* with age; *cp.* *Cymb.* iii. 3. 32, "well corresponding with your *stiff* age": stand'st out? do you stand aloof from this contest? *Cp.* *T. N.* iii. 3. 35, "only myself stood out."

232. I'll lean ... t' other, stiff as I am with age that I have to go on crutches, I will, etc.

233. Ere stay ... business, ere I will stay behind and not take my share in this business; see note on l. 209, above.

234. true-bred, nobly bred; a true Roman.

235. Your company, give us your company, go with us to, etc.

236. attend, are already waiting for.

237. Right ... priority, you being well worthy of precedence; the accusative after *worthy*, and without the preposition *of*, is frequent in Shakespeare.

238. let them follow, said sarcastically, as though they were displaying great eagerness to show their valour in the war.

240. mutiners, a form similar to *pioner*, *muleter*, *enginer*, all of which Shakespeare uses. In *K. J.* ii. 1. 378, *Ham.* v. 2. 6, we have the substantive *mutine*, and the verb in *Ham.* iii. 4. 83; in *Temp.* iii. 2. 40, the form is *mutineer*.

241. puts well forth, shoots out, buds, abundantly; *cp.* *W. T.* i. 2. 254, "But that his negligence, his folly, fear ... Sometime



*puts forth*"; and for the transitive verb, *H. VIII.* iii. 2. 352, "to-day he *puts forth* The tender leaves of hope."

243. **no equal**, *sc.* in pride.

245. **his lip**, the contempt with which his lip curled when speaking of us: **Nay**, but his taunts, you speak of his lip and eyes, but scornful as they were, they were nothing to his taunts.

246. **Being moved** ... **gods**, when provoked, he will not hesitate to gibe even at the gods; for **gird**, *cp.* ii. *H. IV.* i. 2. 7, "men of all sorts take a pride to *gird* at me"; and the substantive, *T. S.* v. 2. 48. The word is the same as to *gride*, to strike, pierce; used in its literal sense by Chaucer, Milton, and Spenser.

247. **Be-mock**, one of the forces of *be-* in composition is that of intensifying, as here; **modest**, because representing the chaste goddess Diana.

248. **The present** ... **him**! may the war now at hand swallow him up! an imprecation. The folios put a comma only after **him**, as though the words were a statement, and Malone thinks that Shakespeare uses 'the present wars' to express the pride of Coriolanus grounded on his military prowess; which kind of pride Brutus says *devours* him. To this Wright justly replies that "it is difficult to see how 'the present wars,' in which Coriolanus has not yet been engaged, can denote the military reputation derived from his past achievements."

248, 9. **he is grown** ... **valiant**, he is puffed up beyond all endurance by the consciousness of his own valour; for the infinitive in this indefinite sense, see Abb. § 356.

249, 51. **Such** ... **noon**, a man of his nature, when flattered by success, disdains even his own shadow as he treads upon it; **success**, meaning literally what follows, was in Shakespeare's day frequently used with such epithets as *good*, *bad*, *best*, and we still speak of *ill*, *fair*, success; **at noon**, the sun then being vertical, a man necessarily treads on his own shadow.

252, 3. **His insolence** ... **Cominius**, a man so arrogant as he is can endure to be a subordinate of Cominius; Schmidt and Wright take **to be commanded Under**, as to hold a command under; **brook**, endure; the original sense of the word was to use, to enjoy.

253. **the which**, "generally used either ... where the antecedent, or some word like the antecedent, is repeated, or else where such a repetition could be made if desired. In almost all cases there are two or more possible antecedents from which selection could be made" (Abb. § 270).

254. **In whom** ... **graced**, with whose favours he has already been plentifully decked; for *who* personifying irrational antecedents, see Abb. § 264.



254-6. **can not ... first**, cannot be more securely held, nor acquired in fuller measure, than by one who occupies a position subordinate to the chief command.

257. **Shall be**, is certain to be accounted as.

257, 8. **though he ... man**, though his performances be as complete as are possible to a man : **giddy censure**, the fickle opinion of the multitude ; **censure**, originally meaning nothing more than opinion, later on came to mean blame, in consequence of the greater readiness of men to form an unfavourable than a favourable opinion of the actions of others ; but in Shakespeare it is more frequently used in a neutral sense, implying neither a good nor a bad estimate.

259. **of Marcius**, regarding Marcius ; cp. *H. V.* ii. 3. 29, "they say he *cried out of sack*."

259. 60. '**O, if ... business!**' how different would the result have been, if he had had the management of the war !

261. **Opinion ... Marcius**, favourable opinion that cleaves so firmly to everything that Marcius does ; for **Opinion**, cp. i. *H. IV.* iii. 2. 42, "*Opinion*, that did help me to the crown" ; for **sticks on**, cp. *Tim.* iv. 3. 263, "The mouths, the tongues, the eyes and hearts of men ... That numberless *upon me stuck* as leaves Do on the oak" ; and for the contrary sense of evil pertinacity, *Oth.* v. 2. 149, "The slime that *sticks on* filthy deeds."

262. **demerits** and **merits** were in Shakespeare's time used in the sense of *dessert* ; cp. *Oth.* i. 2. 22, "and my *demerits* May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune As this that I have reach'd."

263. **are to Marcius**, are sure to belong to Marcius.

264. **his**, sc. Cominius's.

265, 6. **To Marcius ... not**, are certain to redound (by contrast) to the honour of Marcius, even if in reality he should perform nothing worthy of praise.

267. **How ... made**, the manner in which the business of sending forth the troops is managed.

267-9. **and in ... action**, and anything noticeable, beyond his characteristic impetuosity and pride, in the manner in which he goes forth to the war ; cp. *T. N.* ii. 5. 164, "put thyself into the trick of *singularity*." Staunton thinks that the meaning may be "beside his usual assumption of superiority."

269. **Let's along**, let us go along together, to see what now takes place : the verb of motion omitted, as frequently with adverbs ; cp. below, ii. 3. 142, "Will you *along*?"

## SCENE II.

2. **That they ... counsels**, that those in Rome have found their way into our plans; *are enter'd* expresses the present state, *have enter'd* would express the activity necessary to cause that state; for *in*, = into, see Abb. § 159.

3. **Is it not yours?** do you not believe so too?

4-6. **What ever .. circumvention?** What plans have we ever formed and been able to carry out without Rome outwitting us? If **have** is the genuine reading, **What** is equivalent to what things: **four days gone**, four days past, ago; cp. *M. M.* v. 1. 229, "But Tuesday night last *gone*."

7. **Since I heard thence**, since I had news from Rome.

9. **press'd a power**, enrolled a force. Wedgwood (*Dict.*) has shown that **press'd**, in the sense of 'compelled to serve,' has nothing to do with 'press' in the sense of 'crush,' 'squeeze,' but is a corruption of *prest*, ready, *prest-money* being ready money advanced when a man was hired for service, the shilling now given to recruits. "At a later period," he says, "the practice of taking men for the public service by *compulsion* made the word to be understood as if it signified to *force* men into the service, and the original reference to earnest money was quite lost sight of"; **power**, frequent in Shakespeare, both in the singular and the plural, for an army, troops.

10. **Whether ... west**, whether the destination of the troops is to the east or to the west; *i.e.* whether they are to be sent against us or against some other enemy.

13. **of Rome**, by the people of Rome; for **of**, = by, see Abb. § 170.

15. **this preparation**, this force that has been mustered; the abstract for the concrete. Cp. *Cymb.* iv. 3. 29, "Your *preparation* can affront no less Than what you hear of"; *Oth.* i. 3. 14, "The Turkish *preparation* makes for Rhodes."

16. **Whither 'tis bent**, to their destination, whatever it may be.

19. **To answer us**, to meet us in the field; cp. *K. J.* v. 7. 60, "The Dauphin is preparing hitherward, Where heaven He knows how we shall *answer* him."

20. **great pretences**, important designs; cp. *Lear*, i. 4. 75, "which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than a very *pretence* and purpose of unkindness"; and for the verb, *Macb.* ii. 4. 24.

21. **needs**, of necessity; the old genitive used adverbially; cp. *whiles*, *twice* (*i.e.* *twies*), etc.: **in the hatching**, while they were being brought to the birth.

22. appear'd, were revealed : **discovery**, disclosure.
23. shorten'd in our aim, curbed in our projects.
24. To take in, to capture ; as frequently in Shakespeare : **ere** almost, for the transposition, see Abb. § 29.
25. afoot, literally, *on foot*, i.e. in motion.
26. your commission, whereby you are invested with the command of the troops : **hie**, hasten,
27. Let us alone, leave us to guard, etc.
- 28, 9. If they ... **army**, if they should besiege us, bring up your army to cause them to raise the siege ; cp. below, i. 3. 94, "Your lord and Titus Lartius are *set down* before their city Corioli" ; 's, for *us*, is a frequent contraction : for **the remove**, cp. *R. J.* v. 3. 237, "to *remove that siege* of grief from her."
30. They've not ... **us**, that this preparation of theirs is not intended against us.
32. parcels, small portions ; Lat. diminutive, *particula*, a small part : **are forth**, have already set forth.
33. And only hitherward: and are directed against this city and none other.
35. **ever strike**, continue to strike.
36. can do no more, has no strength for any other action, is utterly disabled.
37. your honours, your honourable selves ; a title of respect.

## SCENE III.

STAGE DIRECTION. *Volumnia and Virgilia*, the real names of the mother and the wife of Coriolanus were respectively *Veturia* and *Volumnia*.

2. more comfortable sort, more cheerful manner.
4. would show, desired to show.
- 6, 7. when youth ... **way**, when his youthful beauty made every-one turn to look at him ; **his way**, in his direction : **for an hour**, in return for an hour, or, in order to secure an hour.
7. 8. should not ... **beholding**, would certainly refuse to part with him for a single day ; **sell**, the price given being **an hour of kings' entreaties**.
- 8, 9. how honour .. **person**, in what way honour would best lend a charm to one so comely in appearance ; what kind of honour would be most in keeping with his look and bearing.
- 9-11. that it was ... **stir**, that such comeliness would be no better than a picture to hang on the wall, unless it were set



aglow, roused into animation, by the pursuit of renown; cp. *A. C.* i. 1. 43, "*Cleo.* Antony will be himself. *Ant.* But *stirr'd* by Cleopatra." Schmidt and Wright take to hang by the wall as = to be neglected, as in *M. M.* i. 2. 171, "which have, like unscour'd armour, *hung by the wall*"; *Cymb.* iii. 4. 54, "Poor I am stale, a garment out of fashion; And, for I am richer than to *hang by the walls*, I must be ripp'd"; but in both cases the things spoken of are out of date, and picture-like seems to show that it is the want of animation due to a stay-at-home, monotonous, existence that would take from his comeliness; and it is probably rather with the lifeless tapestry hangings, with their pictorial designs, that the comparison is made. Cp. for the idea Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, ii. 35, 6, "As idle as a painted ship Upon a painted ocean."

12. cruel, bloody, fierce.

13. his brows bound with oak, the oaken garland was an honour granted to one who had saved the life of a Roman citizen in battle and slain his opponent. It ensured the wearer a place next the senators in public assemblies, where all rose as he entered. Coriolanus obtained the garland at the battle of the Lake Regillus, B.C. 498.

13, 4. I sprang ... joy, my heart did not leap with great exultation: a man-child, a male child, a boy; cp. *Macb.* i. 7. 72, "Bring forth *men-children* only."

16. how then? what would have been your feelings in that case?

17. Then his ... son, then the fame he had earned would have been to me in the place of my son; should expresses her determination.

17, 8. I therein ... issue, I should have cherished his fame as though it were the outcome of my womb.

19, 20. each in my love ... Marcius, each of them equally dear with the Marcius whom we both love so dearly.

20-2. I had rather ... action, I should have been more glad that eleven of them should perish than that one of them should live a life of inactive indulgence.

24. to retire myself, to retire to my own chamber. "The predilection for transitive verbs was perhaps one among other causes why many verbs which are now used intransitively, were used by Shakespeare reflexively. Many of these were derived from the French" (Abb. § 296).

26. Methinks ... drum, it seems to me as though I hear the sound of your husband's drum (as he causes it to be beaten for the assault) borne hither; for the use of *forth*, *hence*, *hither*, without a verb of motion (motion being implied), see Abb. § 41.



28. **As children ... him**, the Volscians scuttling away before him like children running for their lives from a bear.

29. **call thus**, thus shout to his own troops afraid to follow him.

30, 1. '**you were ... Rome**,' you may have been born in Rome, but you have nothing of the Roman about you; your sires were a pack of cowards.

32. **mail'd hand**, hand gauntleted in mail; armour made of links of steel.

33, 4. **Like to ... hire**, like a labourer hired for the harvest on the condition that he shall get in the whole crop, or receive no wages for his labour; for the transposition of **or**, which belongs properly to **to mow**, see Abb. § 420.

35. **O Jupiter, no blood!** Jove forbid that a drop of his blood should be spilt!

36. **becomes**, adorns.

37. **Than gilt his trophy**, than the plating of gold adorns a monument erected to a man; **trophy**, literally a monument erected at the spot where the enemy turned and fled; from Gk. τροπή, a turning.

39, 40. **when it spit ... contemning**, when, as though in scorn of their blows, the blood spurted from his wounds in the face of his foes; the blood is spoken of as though animated with the contempt felt by him from whom it was drawn. The folios read '**At Grecian sword. Contemning**,' or '**At Grecian swords Contending**'; the reading in the text is a conjecture of Collier's, adopted by most modern editors.

41. **fit**, prepared, ready.

42. **Heavens ... Aufidius!** may the heavens show their love for my lord by preserving him from the cruel Aufidius; **fell**, A.S. *fel*, cruel, fierce.

43, 4. **He'll beat ... neck**, the strong-minded Volumnia is ashamed that Virgilia's fear should prompt such an unworthy prayer.

48. **you are manifest housekeepers**, you are thorough stay-at-homes; *keep*, in the sense of *remain*, *abide*, is frequent in Shakespeare, e.g. *Cymb.* iii. 5. 46, "She pray'd me to excuse her *keeping* close," i.e. remaining in her room; *Macb.* iii. 2. 8, "How now, my lord, why do you *keep* alone; below, v. 1. 7, "I'll *keep* at home"; for **manifest**, = notorious, well known, cp. *M. M.* v. 1. 303, "The duke's unjust, Thus to retort your *manifest* appeal."

49. **What ... here?** what needle-work are you engaged upon? **A fine spot**, a pretty pattern of embroidery; so, *Oth.* iii. 3. 435, "Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief *Spotted* with

strawberries in your wife's hand?", i.e. embroidered with strawberries.

54, 5. **O' my word ... son**, a true son of his father's, I declare; a 'chip of the old block,' as we say colloquially; **'tis a very pretty boy**, cp. *A. C.* iii. 2. 6, "'Tis a noble Lepidus"; *Tim.* iii. 1. 23, "a noble gentleman 'tis."

55. **O' my troth**, I assure you; literally on, i.e. by my truth: **looked upon him**, watched him playing about.

56. **has**, on the omission of the pronoun before *has*, *is*, *was*, see Abb. § 400: **confirmed**, resolute, determined; cp. *M. A.* v. 4. 17, "Which I will do with *confirmed* countenance"; *Lucr.* 1513, "like a constant and *confirmed* devil."

57. **gilded**, gay-coloured; so, *A. Y. L.* iv. 3. 109, "a *gilded* snake."

58, 9. **and after it again**, and immediately he was in pursuit of it again: **over ... again**, down he comes, head over heels, and in a moment up he gets upon his legs again in full chase.

59. **catched**, here only as a preterite, though used as a participle in *L. L. L.* v. 2. 69, *A. W.* i. 3. 176, *R. J.* iv. 5. 48.

59-61. **or whether ... tear it**, whether his tumble had made him angry, or what was the reason, I don't know, but, etc. For the superfluous **or** before **whether**, see Abb. § 136.

61. **O, I warrant ... it!** I can't tell you how viciously he tore it to pieces; **mammocked**, from *mamnock*, a fragment. Halliwell (*Arch. and Prov. Dict.*) quotes *Optick Glasse of Humors*, 1639, "Small *mammocks* of stone"; and *The School of Vertue*, "Salt with thy knife, then reach to and take, Thy bread cut faire and no *mammocks* make." He also refers to Major Moor's *Suffolk Words and Phrases*, "to cut and hack victuals wastefully."

62. **One on 's father's moods**, just like his father in one of his fits of passion.

64. **A crack**, "a slightly contemptuous phrase applied to a child, and used by Valeria to qualify the compliments of her visitor" (Wright); cp. ii. *H. IV.* iii. 2. 34, "I see him break Scogan's head ... when a' was a *crack* not this high." Grant White thinks that "boys may have been so called on account of their talkative, boastful dispositions."

65. **stitchery**, your stitching; the work upon which you are engaged as stitchers.

65, 6. **I must ... afternoon**, I am determined to make you give up your household cares this afternoon and take a holiday; **hus-wife**, house-wife; now used only in the corrupted form *kussy*, a pert girl. Cp. *Oth.* i. 3. 273, "Let *housewives* make a skillet of my helm."

70. **by your patience**, if you will pardon me : **I'll not ... threshold**, I will not stir a step from home.

73. **go visit**, for the omission of *to*, see Abb. § 349 : **that lies in**, who is in child-bed, who has just had a child born to her.

77. **want love**, am lacking in good feeling.

78. **You would ... Penelope**, you wish to show your loyalty to your husband as strongly as Penelope ; who when Ulysses was at the siege of Troy, and she was pestered by suitors, promised to make her choice among them as soon as she finished a web she was weaving, but, to gain time, undid at night the work she had done by day.

80. **I would**, I could wish : **cambric**, a kind of fine white linen. "A corruption of Cambray, a town in Flanders, where it was first made" (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*). Cp. *arras*, from Arras, in Artois ; *jane*, from Genoa ; *frieze*, from Friesland, etc. etc. : **sensible**, capable of feeling pain ; cp. *J. C.* i. 3. 18, "his hand Not *sensible* of fire" ; *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 337, "Love's feeling is more soft and *sensible*."

81. **leave ... pity**, cease thrusting your needle into it out of mere pity.

92. **the Volsces ... forth**, the Volscians have marched an army out of their territories into ours.

94. **set down**, see note on i. 2. 28.

95, 6. **they nothing ... wars**, they have no doubt of overcoming them and making short work of the war ; for this indefinite use of **it**, see Abb. § 226.

96, 7. **and so ... us**, *i.e.* since I have been able to give you news which may set your heart at rest.

98. **Give me excuse**, allow me to excuse myself ; little more than a periphrastical way of saying 'excuse me,' though with a flavour of greater courtesy.

100, 1. **as she is ... mirth**, in her present frame of mind, she would, if she accompanied us, only spoil our enjoyment, which will be greater without her ; **better**, used proleptically, as *clearer*, *Temp.* v. 1. 68, "so their rising senses Begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantle Their *clearer* reason," *i.e.* their reason which is made clearer by the chasing, etc. ; so, "these *quartered slaves*," above, i. 1. 189.

102, 3. **you ... thy**, on the change from **you** to **thy**, see Abb. § 231.

103, 4. **turn ... door**, banish your sadness ; cp. *Temp.* iii. 2. 78, "by this hand, I'll *turn my mercy out o' doors* and make a stock-fish of thee."



105. **at a word**, in a word ; cp. *M. W. i. 1. 109*, "He hath wronged me : indeed he hath ; *at a word*, he hath" ; *M. A. ii. 1. 118*, "*Urs*. I know you well enough ; you are Signior Antonio. *Ant*. *At a word*, I am not" ; and *l. 125* : **I must not**, I am compelled to refuse you.

## SCENE IV.

1. **A wager ... met**, let me lay you a bet that the armies have come to an engagement.

2. **My horse ... no**, I'll stake my horse against yours that they have not : 'Tis done, agreed ; I accept the wager.

4. **have not ... yet**, have not as yet encountered one another ; cp. *A. C. ii. 6. 25*, "We'll *speak with thee* at sea : at land thou know'st How much we do o'er-count thee."

5. **So ... mine**, there you see, you have lost your wager.

7. **For half ... years**, for as long as ever you like.

8. **Within ... half**, not so much as a mile and a half away ; cp. *Macb. v. 5. 37*, "Within *this* three mile" ; *M. M. i. 3. 21*, "*This* nineteen years."

9. **'larum**, alarum, sounding to arms ; Ital. *all'arme*, to arms !

10. **make ... work**, help us to finish off our work here (*sc.* the taking of the town) quickly.

11. **with smoking swords**, with our swords freshly reeking with the blood of our slain enemies.

12. **fielded**, who have taken the field for battle ; are engaged in battle ; according to Schmidt, **fielded** would belong to a class of adjectives formed from nouns, like "*charmed power*," *i.e.* endowed with a charm, *L. C. 146* ; "*my burdened yoke*," *i.e.* burthensome, *R. III. iv. 4. 11* ; "*fated sky*," *i.e.* which ordains the fate of man, *A. W. i. 1. 232* ; "*knowledge ill inhabited*," *i.e.* having a bad habitation, *A. Y. L. iii. 3. 10*, and many others.

14, 5. **No, nor ... little**, no, nor any one whose fear of you is greater than his, and that (fear) is absolutely nothing. That this is what Shakespeare meant is evident ; but, as Malone has shown, he constantly entangled himself in his use of *more* and *less* and of negatives ; cp. *e.g. Lear, ii. 4. 140-2* ; *T. N. ii. 2. 19* ; *Macb. iii. 6. 8-10* ; *W. T. i. 2. 261* ; *M. V. iv. 1. 161-3*.

16. **Are ... youth**, are being followed by, etc.

17. **pound**, confine as in a pound, or pinfold ; the *pound* is an enclosure common in villages in which animals straying from their owner's land are shut up until a fine is paid for their recovery ; cp. *H. V. i. 2. 160*, "taken and *impounded* as a stray."



18. **yet**, so far; **rushes**, *i.e.* bars that can be snapped in a moment.

20, 21. **list ... army**, you may guess from the sound of his drums how he has forced his way through your army, and is now making short work of its destruction: **are at it**, are engaged in hot fight.

22. **Their noise ... instruction**, let the fury with which, as the noise shows, their conflict is raging, teach us how to fight like them.

23. **forth**, out of; here a preposition, as in *M. N. D.* i. 1. 164, "Steal *forth* thy father's house to-morrow night."

25. **more proof**, more completely impenetrable; weapons are 'proved' before being issued for sale by subjecting them to a greater strain than is likely to be put upon them in use, and 'armour of proof,' or 'proof armour,' is armour which has borne this strain without giving way. The word is also frequently used in a figurative sense. Cp. *Hamlet*. ii. 2. 512, "Mars's armour forg'd for *proof* eterne"; and for the figurative use, *R. J.* ii. 2. 73, "I am *proof* against their enmity"; the word in the former passage being a substantive, in the latter an adjective.

26. **much .. thoughts**, with an audacity such as we never expected.

27. **Which**, *sc.* their so disdaining us.

28. **I'll take ... Volsce**, I'll treat him as though he were a Volscian.

29. **mine edge**, the edge of my sword.

30. **contagion of the south**, Shakespeare frequently speaks of the south and the south wind as being pestilential, *e.g.* *Temp.* i. 2. 323, "a *south-west* blow on ye And blister you all o'er!" *T. C.* v. 1. 21, *A. Y. L.* ii. 2. 50, ii. *H. IV.* ii. 4. 392: **light**, alight.

31-4. **You shames ... mile!** you disgraces to your native country? you herd of—(here Coriolanus breaks off without adding the epithet he had intended, and pours down curses upon them), may you be covered from head to foot with boils and plague-sores, so that your stench may make you loathed even when too far off to be seen, and your infection be borne from one to another in the very teeth of the wind however far you may be apart, *i.e.* be so powerful that even a strong wind will not be able to blow it away; for **Against**, in this sense, cp. *A. C.* iii. 13. 39, "*Against* the blown rose may they stop their nose That kneel'd unto the buds"; and for another instance of the impetuosity with which Coriolanus suddenly breaks off in his speech, cp. below, i. 6. 42. 3. The reading in the text is Johnson's; the

folios give either 'Rome: you Heard of Byles,' or 'Rome: you Herd of Biles.'

36. **Pluto and hell!** Hades, or Pluto, properly the god of wealth, was in Grecian mythology the ruler of the nether world, the abode of the shades, or departed spirits.

37. 8. **backs red ... fear!** backs bloody with wounds received in fight, and faces pale with the terror which shakes you as though stricken with the ague.

38. **Mend ... home,** recover your courage and pierce their ranks with your charge; **home,** in good earnest; used adverbially, as frequently in Shakespeare for any vigorous or thorough effort.

39. **by the fires of heaven,** I swear by the sun and stars; cp. *Lear*, iii. 7. 61, "the stelled fires"; and below, v. 4. 42, "As certain as I know the sun is fire."

40. **make my wars,** direct my onset: **look to 't,** take care to obey my words.

41. **we'll beat,** we may make sure of beating: **to their wives,** so that they will be obliged to take refuge with their wives, shelter themselves behind their wives' petticoats.

43. **ope,** open; for the tendency in Elizabethan English to drop the inflection *en*, see Abb. § 343; **prove good seconds,** worthily second, support, my efforts.

44. 5. **'Tis for ... fliers,** it is to admit us, the pursuers, that fortune opens them so wide, not to protect these runaways. Plutarch writes, "But Martius ... did chase and follow them to their own gates, that fled for life. And there perceiving that the Romans retired back ... he did encourage his fellows with words and deeds, crying out to them, 'that fortune had opened the gates of the city, more for the followers than the fliers'" (Skeat, *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, pp. 7, 8).

46. **Fool-hardiness; not I,** his entering the gates is but the extravagance of valour, which I will not imitate.

47. **To the pot, ... him,** he has gone to certain destruction; cp. our colloquial phrase 'out of the frying-pan into the fire.' Staunton illustrates the expression from Peele's *Edward I.*, "For goes this wretch, this traitor, to the pot"; Webster's *White Devil*, "They go to the pot for it"; *New Custome*, ii. 3, "Thou mightest swear, if I could, I would bring them to the pot."

50. **who,** and they.

51. **Clapp'd to,** shut with a sudden jerk; cp. i. *H. IV.* ii. 4. 305, "Hostess, clap to the door"; *A. C.* iii. 10. 20, "clap on," i.e. put on hastily; *K. J.* iii. 1. 235, "clap up," arrange hastily.

51, 2. **he is ... city,** he is there all by himself to face the whole city; for answer, cp. above, i. 2. 19.

53, 4. **Who sensibly ... up**, who though capable of pain shows himself less susceptible to it than his inanimate sword, and stands up erect and fearless even when it yields as though in awe. For **sensibly**, Thirlby conjectured *sensible*, a reading which some editors adopt; cp. *youngly*, ii. 3. 229. Steevens thinks that the thought has been adopted from Sidney's *Arcadia*, "Their very armour by piece-meale fell away from them; and yet their flesh abode the wounds constantly, as though it were *lesse sensible* of smart than the *senselesse* armour," etc.

55, 6. **A carbuncle ... jewel**, with this hyperbole Malone compares *Oth.* v. 2. 144-6, "If heaven had made me such another woman, Of one entire and perfect chrysolite, I'd not have ta'en it for her"; a **carbuncle** is originally a glowing coal, from Lat. *carbunculus*, a small coal; then a gem, and lastly a boil which from its fiery appearance resembles a live coal. "A name variously applied to precious stones of a red or fiery colour; the carbuncles of the ancients (of which Pliny describes twelve varieties) were probably sapphires, spinels or rubies, and garnets; in the Middle Ages and later, besides being a name for the ruby, the term was especially applied to a mythical gem said to emit a light in the dark; in modern lapidary work the term is applied to the garnet when cut *en cabochon*, or of a boss form, usually hollowed out to allow the colour of the stone to be seen" (Murray, *Eng. Dict.*).

57. **Even ... wish**, exactly such as Cato would have desired; for **to**, = up to, see Abb. § 187.

59. **thy sounds**, the sound of your blows on the armour of your foes.

61. **feverous**, feverish; cp. *Macb.* ii. 3. 66, "some say, the earth Was *feverous* and did shake"; used figuratively in *M. M.* iii. 1. 75, "I quake, Lest thou a *feverous* life should entertain."

62. **Let's fetch ... alike**, let us rescue him from his pursuers, or stand by him to repel them; **make remain**, merely a periphrasis for *remain*; cp. "*make retire*," *L. L. L.* ii. 1. 234; "*make retreat*," *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 169; "*make return*," *T. G.* ii. 7. 14.

#### SCENE V.

3. **A murrain on't**, plague on it! curse it! **murrain**, an infectious disease among cattle, ultimately from Lat. *mori*, to die: **took this for**, supposed this to be.

STAGE DIRECTION, *a trumpet*, i.e. trumpeter; as *standard* for standard-bearer, *Temp.* iii. 2. 18; cp. *H. V.* iv. 2. 61, "I will the banner from a *trumpet* take."



4. **these movers**, these fellows who are so busy ransacking every hole and corner for plunder.

4, 5. **that do ... drachma**, that think their time well spent if they can secure the smallest booty. The **drachma**, literally a handful, was a Greek coin varying in value from 9<sup>d</sup>d. to 1s. 3d., and a **crack'd drachma**, *i.e.* cracked so as to be uncurrent, would of course be worth still less. The coin is still current in Greece.

6. **Irons of a doit**, bits of iron worth no more than a doit; for **of**, worth, cp. *M. M.* ii. 1. 95, "a dish *of* some three-pence"; ii. 1. 127, "a man *of* fourscore pound"; **doit**, a small Dutch coin, *Du. duit*; cp. *Temp.* ii. 2. 33, *M. V.* i. 3. 141.

6, 7. **doublets ... them**, *i.e.* that the hangman would not think worth keeping for himself; **doublet**, properly an inner garment which served, so to speak, as a lining or double to the outer one. Wright remarks, "Shakespeare dressed his ancient Romans like the English of his own day. In the same way he makes the English custom of giving to executioners the clothes of their victims as a perquisite prevail in Rome."

8. **Ere yet ... done**, so greedy are they of even such worthless trifles that they cannot wait till the fight is over to begin plundering.

10. **of my soul's hate**, whom I hate from the bottom of my soul.

11. **Piercing**, forcing his way through.

12. **Convenient ... city**! a force sufficient to hold the city; cp. *H. VIII.* v. 4. 57, "They fell on; I *made good* my place"; *Cymb.* v. 3. 23, "He, with two striplings—... *Made good* the passage." Schmidt points out that in this sense the two words are never separated by the object, though in the senses of *prove to be true*, *carry into effect*, this is frequently the case.

16. **a second course**, as though fighting were as a feast to him; with an allusion to the second or principal course of viands at a dinner; cp. *Macb.* ii. 2. 39, "Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care ... great nature's *second course*, Chief nourisher in life's feast"; and below, i. 9. 10, 1, "Yet cam'st thou to a morsel of this feast Having fully dined before."

17. **My work ... me**, I have but just begun my work, have not yet warmed to it as I shall do after a while; for the transposition of **yet not**, cp. *Cymb.* ii. 3. 80, "I *yet not* understand the case myself"; and see Abb. § 420.

18. **drop**, shed from my body; cp. *J. C.* iv. 3. 73, "I had rather coin my heart And *drop my blood* for drachmas": **physical**, medicinal, restorative; cp. *J. C.* ii. 1. 261, "is it *physical* To walk unbraced and suck up the humours Of the dank morning?"



19. **thus**, *sc.* with the blood flowing from his wounds.

21. **her great charms**, here **charms** is used in the sense of fascinations of beauty, but with a secondary allusion to the magic spells of sorcerers, witches, etc.

22. **Misguide ... swords!** turn aside the blows of your enemies; as Prospero charms Ferdinand's sword, *Temp.* ii. 2. 466.

23. **be thy page**, follow your footsteps; as a page follows his master.

23, 4. **Thy friend ... highest!** may she be as firm a friend to you as to those whom she raises to the greatest heights of prosperity!

28. **Where ... mind**, and there they shall learn what our intentions are.

#### SCENE VI.

1. **Breathe you**, recover your breath by pausing a moment; cp. i. *H. IV.* i. 3. 102, "Three times they *breathed* and three times did they drink, Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood."

1-3. **we are ... retire**, we have acquitted ourselves in the combat worthily of our race, neither foolishly attempting to maintain an untenable position, nor cowardly in retreating while it was possible to make it good; for **come off**, cp. *K. J.* v. 5. 4, "O, bravely *came we off*."

4. **Whiles ... struck**, during the time we were engaged in fight; **whiles**, the old genitive used as a conjunction.

5. **By interims ... gusts**, at intervals and by means of the wind blowing in this direction; cp. *Oth.* i. 1. 76, "As when *by* night and negligence, the fire *Is* spied in populous cities," *i.e.* when the fire which has broken out *through* negligence *during* the night, is discovered.

7. **Lead ... own**, guide them to such success as we wish for ourselves.

9. **May give ... sacrifice**, may offer you sacrifices in gratitude for your favour.

16. **'Tis not ... drums**, why, the distance between us is not more than a mile, as we know by hearing their drums only a few minutes ago; **briefly**, referring to *past* time, is not elsewhere used by Shakespeare.

17. **confound**, spend to such poor purpose; cp. i. *H. IV.* i. 3. 100, "He did *confound* the best part of an hour In changing hardiment with great Glendower."

19. **Held me in chase**, kept pursuing me : the omission of *so* before *that* is frequent in Shakespeare.

19, 20. **to wheel ... about**, to make a circuit of three or four miles.

22. **as he were flay'd**, as he would do if he were flayed ; see note on i. 1. 203.

23. **the stamp**, the character and bearing.

24. **Before-time**, ere-while, at other times before.

25. **knows ... tabor** ; does not more readily distinguish between the sound of thunder and the sound of a tabor ; **shepherd**, because those who live a life in the open air are keenly alive to all sounds, and particularly to those of the atmosphere ; **tabor**, a small drum, used especially for festivities ; in *M. A.* ii. 3. 15, it is contrasted with the drum of war, "I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife ; and now he had rather hear the *tabor* and the pipe."

27. **From ... man**, from the voice of every man his inferior.

28, 9. **Ay, if ... own**, yes, if the blood with which you are covered, as by a mantle, is your own and not that drawn from your foes, *i.e.* if you are as mortally wounded as you must be if all the blood on your person is your own : **clip**, embrace ; as frequently in Shakespeare.

30. **In arms as sound**, with arms as full of vigour.

32. **And tapers ... bedward**, and the lighted tapers were being carried to conduct me to bed ; for the tmesis in **to bedward**, = toward bed, cp. i. *H. VI.* iii. 3. 30, "Their powers are marching *unto Paris-ward*," *i.e.* in the direction of Paris.

33. **How is 't ... Lartius ?** how do things fare with Lartius ?

36. **Ransoming him, or pitying**, from one man accepting a ransom or setting him free out of mere pity ; for **ransoming**, in this sense, cp. *L. L. L.* i. 2. 65. "I would take Desire prisoner, and *ransom* him to any French courtier for a new-devised courtesy ; for **him**, = one man (and here belonging to both participles), see Abb. § 217, and cp. *Mach.* iv. 3. 80, "Desire *his* jewels and this other's house."

37. **Holding ... Rome**, holding Corioli as a possession of Rome.

38, 9. **Even like ... will**, just as the game-keeper with the eager greyhound in the leash, holding him back or letting him go in pursuit of the game just as he pleases. The latter part of the simile does not apply to Corioli, but indicates the ease with which Lartius exercises his power ; he has Corioli just as much in command as a game-keeper his hound ; **fawning**, *i.e.* in his eagerness to be let go. On **leash**, a writer in the *Ed. Rev.* for October, 1872, quotes from the *Art of Venerie*, "We finde some

difference of termes betwene hounds and grey hounds ... The stringe wherewith we leade a grey hound is called a *lease*, and for a hound a *lyame*"; to *let slip* is also a technical term, and the *slips*, contrivances for starting two dogs at the same time, consist of two collars united by a hollow leather strap, through which runs a cord that on being pulled unfastens both the collars. Cp. *H. V.* iii. 1. 31, "I see you stand like greyhounds in the *slips* Straining upon the start"; *Cymb.* iv. 3. 23, *J. C.* iii. 1. 273.

39. **slave, wretched liar.**

40. **beat ... trenches**, driven you back to your own entrenchments; cp. i. *H. VI.* i. 5. 33, "retire into your *trenches*."

42. **inform the truth**, gave you true information; for this transitive use of **inform**, cp. *M. M.* iii. 2. 136, "*That let me inform you*"; *A. W.* iv. 1. 91, "haply thou mayst *inform* *Something* to save thy life": but for our gentlemen, if it had not been for our gentry.

43. **The common file**, the rank and file, as opposed to the officers; the common soldiers: **a plague! curse them! tribunes for them!** they are a nice lot to have tribunes to protect their rights!

44. **budge, fly before, bestir themselves** to get out of the way of.

45. **But ... you?** but how after your repulse did you succeed in overcoming them?

46. **Will ... tell?** shall I have time to tell you? For the omission of *so* after **think**, see Abb. § 64.

47. **lords o' the field**, masters of the battle-field.

49, 50. **We have ... purpose**, for some time we were getting the worst of the engagement and were obliged to retire in order to achieve our purpose.

51. **How lies their battle?** what is the disposition, battle-array, of their forces?

52. **men of trust**, most trustworthy troops: **As I guess**, so far as I can conjecture.

53. **vaward, front**; "another spelling of *vanward* or *vanguard*" [which is from the O. F. *avant-warde*, Lat. *ab ante*] (*Skeat, Ety. Dict.*): **Antiates**, inhabitants of Antium, an ancient city of Latium, about twenty miles almost direct south of Corioli.

54. **Of ... trust**, enjoying their greatest confidence.

55. **Their very ... hope**, the very centre of their hope; cp. "*the heart of falsehood*," *T. C.* iii. 2. 202; "*the very heart of kindness*," *Tim.* i. 1. 286; "*the very heart of falsehood*," *A. C.* iv. 12. 29; and for other instances of transpositions in noun-clauses containing two nouns connected by *of*, see Abb. § 423.

56. **By**, in the name of.



60. And that ... **present**, and that you will not delay to deliver the attack at once; **the present**, the opportunity which now offers; cp. below, iii. 3. 42, and *M. M.* iv. 2. 27, "if not, use him *for the present* and dismiss him," i.e. for the present occasion.

61. **advanced**, drawn and carried ready for action.

62. **We prove ... hour**, we may put matters to the test at once; make trial of the hour and see what it will bring.

62-4. **Though I ... you**, though I should be better pleased if I could persuade you to refresh yourself by a bath and to allow your wounds to be dressed with ointments; **balm**, a contracted form of *balsam*, an aromatic plant.

65. **your asking**, anything you think fit to ask.

66, 7. **Those ... willing**, they who can render me the best help are those who have the best will to do so; it is eagerness and resolution that make the best allies.

68. **As it ... doubt**, as these must be, for it would be a sin to doubt about it.

68, 9. **that love ... smear'd**, that are enamoured with the fierce joys of carnage.

69, 70. **if any ... report**, if there be any who dread the reproach of cowardice more than personal danger: **fear his person**, fear for his person; **fear an ill report**, fear the disgrace of being ill spoken of; for the double comparative, **lesser**, see Abb. § 11. Malone compares *T. C.* i. 3. 265, 6, "If there be one among the fair'st of Greece That holds his honour higher than his ease."

71, 2. **If any ... himself**, if there be any who thinks a brave death is preferable to a contemptible life, and holds his country's welfare dearer than his own safety.

73, 4. **Let him ... disposition**, let him alone, or as many as are like-minded, declare by waving his sword aloft as I do, that such are his sentiments.

76. **Of me ... me?** the folios read 'Oh me alone, make you a sword of me': I have followed Singer in reading **Of** for *Oh*, though to give a stronger emphasis I have put a note of interrogation after **sword**, and repeated it after **me**. Most modern editors give, 'O, me alone! make you a sword of me?' The meaning seems to be, Do you by thus raising me in your arms, brandish me as it were your sword, the only sword you would use?

77. **be not outward**, are not mere professions without any reality.

77, 8. **which of you .. Volsces**, there is not one of you who is not the equal of many Volscians; **four**, used indefinitely.



79, 80. **Able to wear ... his**, capable of showing himself the equal in valour of the great Aufidius.

82. **Shall ... business**, shall have full opportunity given him of fighting another day; cp. i. 1. 260.

83. **As cause ... obey'd**, according as the occasion may demand.

84, 5. **And four ... inclined**, and four of you shall be deputed to choose out as the body I am to command those who are most eager for the duty; **four**, indefinitely, a small number to be selected by Coriolanus.

86, 7. **Make good ... us**, prove that this display of valour is something more than display, and you shall have an equal share with us in the harvest that we reap.

### SCENE VII.

1. **So, very good: ports, gates.**

3. **centuries**, bands of a hundred men each.

3, 4. **the rest ... holding**, those left (after the centuries have been despatched) will be enough to hold the city for a short period.

4, 5. **if we lose ... town**, if we are worsted in the engagement, there will be no use in having a larger number shut up here, for in that case we may give up all idea of retaining possession of the town.

5. **Fear not our care**, do not doubt our being on the alert, being thoroughly watchful.

6. **upon's**, behind us, as soon as we are out of them.

### SCENE VIII.

2. **We hate alike**, your hatred cannot be greater than mine.

3, 4. **More than ... envy**, more than I begrudge you your fame; the folios give *and* **envy**, for which Collier and Dyce, whom I have followed, read **I**, the former pointing out that the compositor mistook **I** for the contraction of *and*. In i. 1. 220-2 Marcius says of Aufidius, "I sin in envying his nobility, And were I anything but what I am, I would wish me only he"; and it is not so much his hatred as his jealousy that he here expresses. Steevens explains 'fame *and* envy' as 'detested' or 'odious fame,' which most editors accept. He also suggests that the construction may be, Not Afric owns a serpent I more abhor and envy than thy fame.

5. **the first budger**, the first of us to flinch.

6. **doom**, *sc.* to perdition.

7. **Holloa ... hare**, pursue me with cries, like hunters when pursuing that timorous creature, the hare: **Within ... hours**, not three hours ago.

8. **Corioli walls**, for other instances of nouns converted to adjectives, see Abb. § 22.

9. **And made ... pleased**, and swept everything before me, carried matters just as I pleased.

10. **mask'd**, disguised: **for thy revenge**, if you wish to take your revenge for the beatings you have received at my hands.

11. **Wrench ... highest**, strain your efforts to the very utmost; cp. *Macb.* i. 7. 60, "But screw your courage to the sticking-place."

12. **That was ... progeny**, must mean, as Johnson says, "the whip with which the Trojans scourged the Greeks," **of your** being = possessed by your, and **progeny** being used as in i. *H.* VI. v. 4. 38, for *race*, *ancestry*, the Romans claiming descent from the Trojans. But the expression is a very strange one: and it looks, if one dared to say so, as though Shakespeare had confounded Hector and Achilles; for Aufidius would hardly compliment Coriolanus on the prowess of his ancestor.

14, 5. **Officious ... seconds**, by rendering me this assistance, for which I can only curse you, you have disgraced me, and so far from proving your own valour, have only shown yourselves meddlers in what does not concern you; for **Officious**, = obtrusive in offering assistance, cp. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 330, "You are too *officious* In her behalf that scorns your services"; **In your condemned seconds**, in seconding me in this accursed way; **In**, by means of; cp. *A. C.* iii. 1. 17, "Cæsar and Antony have ever won More *in* their officer than person."

## SCENE IX.

STAGE DIRECTION. **scarf**, handkerchief here used as a sling.

1. **tell thee o'er**, recount, reckon up the various deeds; cp. *M. N. D.* v. 1. 23, "But all the story of the night *told over*."

3. **Where senators ... smiles**, in the senate-house where the relation will be certain to be received with mingled grief and joy; grief at what you have gone through, joy at the glory you have won.

4, 5. **Where great ... admire**, in assemblies of the patricians where, though at first they incredulously shrug their shoulders as they listen to the story, they will be certain to end by giving you due applause.

6. **And, ... more, and,** enjoying the sensation of being so frightened, will be eager for more details of the same kind; for **quaked**, as a transitive verb, Steevens compares Heywood, *The Silver Age*, "We'll *quake* them at that bar Where all souls wait for sentence": dull, stupid, doltish.

7. **with ... plebeians**, like the rank-scented common-people; **fusty**, literally, smelling of the cask, from O. F. *fuste*, a cask. So, ii. 1. 223, Coriolanus is reported as speaking of "their stinking breaths"; **plebeians**, accented on the first syllable: **thine honours**, the honours paid to you.

8. **against their hearts**, in opposition to their real feelings.

10, 11. **Yet cam'st thou ... before**, in coming to take your share with us in the fighting here, you come as one who, having fully feasted, is still unsatisfied and would have more, however small the portion to be obtained; *i.e.* one might have thought that you had had enough of fighting, but your appetite for it seems insatiable. Cp. *Macb.* v. 5. 13, "I have *supp'd full* with horrors."

12. **Here is ... caparison**, Coriolanus has done all the fighting, our part in the business has been merely show; **caparison**, from O. F. *caparasson*, ... — Span. *caparazon*, a cover for a saddle or coach; formed as a sort of augmentative from Span. *capa*, a cloak, mantle, cover "... (Skeat, *Éty. Dict.*).

14. **Who ... blood**, who is entitled by her motherhood to extol her offspring; for **blood**, cp. *J. C.* i. 1. 56, "That comes in triumph over Pompey's *blood*," *i.e.* the sons of Pompey.

16. **that's what I can**, to wit, that of which I am capable: **induced**, spurred on.

17. **that's for my country**, namely by love of my country; **country**, metrically a trisyllable.

18. **his good will**, that which he determinedly set himself to do; cp. *A. C.* ii. 5. 8, "And when *good will* is show'd, though 't come too short, The actor may plead pardon."

19. **Hath ... act**, has placed himself on a level with me (since I have done no more than perform the task I set myself). Malone compares *Macb.* iv. i. 145, "The flighty *purpose* never is *o'ertook*, Unless the deed goes with it."

19, 20. **You shall ... deserving**, you shall not be allowed in this way to bury your great deeds in obscurity.

21. **her own, &c. children.**

21-3. **'twere ... doings**, to conceal your exploits, as you would have us do, would be something worse than a robbery of your dues, would be a slander; not the mere negative withholding of what belongs to you, though that would be a crime, but the positive injury of defaming you.



23-5. and to silence ... **modest**, and to hush in silence that which to proclaim aloft even to the highest pinnacle of eulogy would be but scanty justice; in **spire** there seems to be an allusion to the hoisting of flags and the ringing of bells in celebration of some great exploit; **vouch'd**, warranted. A somewhat similar idea occurs in *Hamlet* iv. 7. 27-9, "Whose worth ... Stood challenger on mount of all the age For her perfections."

26, 7. **In sign ... me**, in token of what we acknowledge you to be, not as a reward for your exploits, let me proclaim before the army what my estimate of you is.

29. **To hear**, at hearing; for the infinitive used indefinitely, see Abb. § 356.

29-31. **Should they ... death**, but the case would be worse if they were not remembered, for then they would have good cause to fester in anger at ingratitude, and to probe themselves with mortal violence. To **tent** is to probe (a wound) with a *tent*, or roll of lint, in order to find out its extent and to cleanse it of matter; and here instead of the surgeon probing the wound in this salutary manner, the wound in its irritation would only induce death; cp. iii. 1. 236, and for **tent**, *Cymb.* iii. 4. 118, "mine ear can take no greater wound Nor *tent* to bottom that"; *T. C.* ii. 2. 16.

32. **good and good store**, valuable ones and those in plenty; cp. ii. *H. IV.* iv. 3. 131, "*good and good store* of fertile sherris."

33. **achieved**, won; "from O. F. *achever*, *achiever*, to accomplish. Formed from the phrase *venir a chef* or *venir a chief*, to come to the end or arrive at one's object" ... (*Skeat, Ety. Dict.*).

34-6. **to be ... distribution**, which you are at liberty to choose out entirely at your discretion before the distribution to the army in general begins to be made. For the transposition of **only**, see Abb. § 420.

39, 40. **And stand ... doing**, and claim to share and share alike with those who were present at the action, even if they had no part in it. For **stand upon**, = insist, cp. *H. V.* v. 2. 94, "When articles too nicely urged be *stood on*."

41-6. **May these ... wars!** may these instruments, which you profane by using them for the purpose of proclaiming my triumphs (not for the purpose for which they were intended, that of giving the signal for the onset in battle), never be allowed to sound again! when drums and trumpets shall be employed in war for the purpose of flattery, we may well expect that courts and cities should wear one face of hypocritical cajolery (be made up of hypocrisy and nothing else)! when steel grows soft as the silken garments of the fawning hangers-on of rich men, let it (**him**, the silk) be used as a protection in battle! In l. 46 the folios give an *Overture*, for which most modern editors substitute



a *coverture*, Tyrwhitt's conjecture. Those who retain an *Overture* (reading *them* for *him*), explain, "let these drums and trumpets be used as a prelude for wars." Now, Shakespeare elsewhere uses *overture* only as = disclosure, communication (*W. T.* ii. 1. 172, *Lear*, iii. 7. 89), or as = proposal, offer (*A. W.* iv. 3. 46, v. 3. 99, *T. N.* i. 5. 225); and in the contemporary dictionaries the word is found only in these and kindred senses, not in the modern sense of a prelude, or piece of music at the opening of a concert, opera, etc. But even if it were used in this modern sense, it would have little force here. Marcius's meaning clearly is, let things be turned to a use they have never as yet had; whereas for drums and trumpets to be used as a prelude to a fight would be for them to be used as they ordinarily were. Against a *coverture* there are two objections. In the first place, it is very unlikely that a *coverture* should be altered to an *Overture* (with a capital *O*); and, secondly, though Shakespeare twice uses *coverture*, the word in both instances (*M. A.* iii. 1. 30, "the woodbine *coverture*," iii. *H. VI.* iv. 2. 13, "night's *coverture*") means a cover which conceals, not a cover which protects,—the meaning here required. I have therefore ventured in the place of *overture* to read *armature*, a word in use (though uncommon) in Shakespeare's time, both literally and figuratively, e.g. Becon, *Pathway of Prayer*, 1542, "Prayer is truly called a ... heavenly *armature*"; Guillim, *Heraldrie*, 1611, "For by *Armature* we understand not onely those things that appertaine to the Military profession, but also those defensive sciences of Masonry and Carpentry and Metall work": More, *Antid. Ath.*, 1662, "His hoofs are made so fit for ... that round *armature* of Iron" (quotations *apud* Murray's *Eng. Dict.*). I have also for the sake of the rhythm inserted *is* after *as* in l. 45. But I believe there is (as Lettsom suspected) a further corruption in l. 44. To make the contrast really forcible, we need instead of **Made** some such word as *Cleans'd*, *Purg'd*, *Freed*, *Stripp'd*; and it is improbable that Shakespeare would have written **Let him be made** so immediately after **let courts .. be Made**. The whole passage is analogous to the Fool's prophecy in *Lear*, iii. 2. 81-93, where it is predicted that "the realm of Albion" shall "come to great confusion" when a series of events takes place, none of which is within the range of probability.

44. *soothing*, flattery, cajolery; cp. *K. J.* iii. 1. 121, "thou art perjured too And *soothe'st up* greatness"; and *soother*, i. *H. IV.* iv. 1. 7, "I do defy The tongues of *soothers*."

45. *parasite*, a trencher-friend, a hanger-on; literally one who eats beside another at his table; from Gk. *παρά*, beside, and *αῖτος*, wheat, bread, food.

46. **No more**, I say! let me have no more of such flattery, I say!

46, 7. **For that ... wretch**, because, forsooth, I have not stopped

in the thick of the battle to wash my nose when it bled, or have got the better of some puny fellow.

49. **without note**, without anyone noticing them and thinking it necessary to trumpet forth their praises.

52, 3. **As if ... lies**, as though I were fond of having my poor merits fed upon praises seasoned with exaggeration; cp. *Cymb.* iii. 4. 183, "Thou art all the comfort The gods will *diet* me *with*."

54. **your good report**, the good report made about you.

55. **give you truly**, paint you in your true colours; cp. *A. C.* i. 4. 40, "men's reports *give* him much wrong'd": **by your patience**, with your permission.

57. **his proper harm**, injury to himself; Lat. *proprius*, own.

58. **Then reason ... you**, then argue with you as to the honours to be paid you, without fear of your doing yourself an injury.

60. **Wears ... garland**, has earned and justly wears the chief glory of this war; not the material oaken crown afterwards presented to him; for **the which**, see note on i. 1. 253.

62. **With all ... belonging**, together with the trappings, etc., that go with him; for **trim**, cp. *A. C.* iv. 4. 22, "A thousand, sir, ... have on their riveted *trim*," though there it is the armour of men.

64. **With all ... host**, my words being echoed by the clamorous applause of the whole army.

65. **Caius Marcius Coriolanus**, the first is the *prænomen* peculiar to the individual; the second, the *nomen*, or *nomen gentilicium*, or name of the clan to which he belonged; the third, the *agnomen*, or name, or title, added on (the addition of l. 66) given as an honorary distinction. Such *agnomina* were sometimes given, as here, by one general to another, sometimes by the army and confirmed by the general in chief, sometimes by the people assembled in public, and sometimes were assumed by the person himself. **Coriolanus**, here the *i* must be pronounced short.

69. **fair**, no longer smeared with blood and dirt.

70. **howbeit**, at any rate; *how be it*, however it be.

72, 3. **To undercrest ... power**, worthily, so far as I am able, wearing as a crest or distinctive badge the title you have been pleased to confer upon me; *crest*, literally, the comb or tuft on a bird's head, then the 'cognizance' worn on the top of the helmet to distinguish the wearer, now only an armorial bearing.

74. **repose us**, lay myself down to rest.

77. **The best**, "the chief men of Corioli" (Johnson): **articulate**, enter into negotiations, an *article* being a clause in a stipulation; cp. i. *H. IV.* v. 1. 72, "These things indeed you have *articu-*

*iated*" (the folio reading), where the word means to specify particulars.

78. I shall, "when a person speaks of *his own* future actions as inevitable, he often regards them as inevitable only because fixed by himself" (Abb. § 318).

79. The gods ... *me*. the gods reprove my pride in refusing what was offered me by prompting me to make a petition.

80. *bound*, obliged, destined.

82. I sometime lay, I lodged, found shelter for a time; cp. below, iv. 4. 8.

84. cried to me, *sc.* when he was being carried off prisoner by the Roman soldiers.

85, 6. But then ... *pity*, but at that moment Aufidius was in sight, and my wrath against him drove out the pity I felt for this poor old man.

87. O, well begg'd, a noble request.

89. *free* ... *wind*, Malone compares *A. Y. L.* ii. 7. 48, "I must have liberty Withal, *as large a charter as the wind*"; so, *H. V.* i. 1. 48, "The air, *a charter'd libertine*, is still"; *St. John*, iii. 8, "*The wind bloweth where it listeth.*"

90. *forgot*, elliptical for 'it has been forgotten by me'; for the curtailed form of the participle, see Abb. § 343.

93. The blood ... *dries*, the blood from the wound on your face is getting clotted, and should be washed off.

## SCENE X.

2. on good condition, on fair terms.

4, 5. for I cannot ... *am*, for being a Volscian and therefore obliged to submit to terms, my former proud independence is at an end.

6, 7. What good ... *mercy*? there seems to be a mixture of meanings here between 'what good quality can a treaty find in those who lie at the mercy of the victors (with a reference to his own condition) so as to treat them well,' and 'what good terms can a treaty find in behalf of those that lie,' etc. For at *mercy*, cp. *T. C.* iv. 4. 116, "If e'er thou stand *at mercy* of my sword."

11. beard to beard, face to face; with the additional idea of the manliness of look which the beard gives to the face.

12. He's mine ... *his*, one or other of us shall perish.

12, 3. mine emulation ... *had*, my rivalry with him is no longer of that honourable nature it once was: *where*, whereas.



14. **I thought ... force**, I hoped to overcome him in fair open combat; to meet him in hand to hand conflict without any adventitious aid, and overcome him; for **in**, see note on i. 8. 15.

15. **True sword to sword**, sword meeting sword in honourable strife.

15, 6. **I'll potch ... him**, I will seek his life, just as eagerly by secret assassination as by open combat; **potch**, "to thrust, poke ... Merely a weakened form of *poke*, just as *pitch* is of *pick*, *stitch* of *stick*, etc." (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*): for **get**, = lay hold of, cp. *Oth.* v. 2. 244, "every puny whipster *gets* my sword."

17, 8. **My valour's ... him**, my valour has lost its healthy tone merely from being eclipsed by his superiority; cp. *A. C.* iii. 4. 27, "I'll raise the preparation of a war Shall *stain* your brother"; and *V. A.* 9, where Venus addresses Adonis as "Thrice fairer than myself ... *Stain* to all nymphs," i.e. quite casting them into the shade by his beauty. Dyce follows Tyrwhitt in reading "**My valour poison'd**," with a comma only after **him**, which makes the construction of the following words less harsh.

18, 9. **for him ... itself**, and on his account shall abandon its natural character: **nor ... sanctuary**, neither the fact of his being asleep, nor of his having taken refuge in a temple; from old times the person of a man who had taken refuge in a sacred building was inviolable. Shakespeare speaks of taking sanctuary, *R. III.* iii. 1. 28, of breaking sanctuary, i.e. violating it, *R. III.* iii. 1. 47, and of sanctuary men, and sanctuary children, *R. III.* iii. 1. 55, 6.

20. **Being naked ... Capitol**, neither his being naked or ill, neither his being at worship in the temple or engaged in public affairs in the Capitol.

21. **times of sacrifice**, when the commission of murder would be doubly heinous.

22. **Embarquements ... fury**, any of which should be sufficient to put a curb upon fury. Cotgrave gives "*Embarquement*, an imbarcking, taking ship ... also, an imbarguing," i.e. laying an embargo upon; Span. *embargo*, seizure, arrest.

22-4. **shall lift ... Marcius**, shall have power to assert their musty privilege in opposition to the hatred I bear to Marcius; **rotten**, antiquated, to him no longer time-honoured: **where**, wherever.

25. **upon ... guard**, "in my own house, with my brother posted to protect him" (Johnson).

26. **Against ... canon**, in the teeth of the law of hospitality which makes a guest a sacred person; cp. *Mach.* i. 7. 12-6, "He's here in double trust; First, as I am his kinsman and his subject



... then, as his host, Who should against the murderer shut the door, Not bear the knife myself."

27. Wash ... heart, amply satiate my fierce enmity in his death; cp. *J. C.* ii. 1. 105-7, "Stoop, Romans, stoop, And let us bathe our hands in Cæsar's blood Up to the elbows, and besmear our swords."

28. how 'tis held, what troops hold possession of it : what, of what name and rank : must, are destined.

30. attended, expected, awaited, by friends.

31. 'Tis south ... mills, the place where you will find me is to the south of the mills that supply the city with corn. Wright remarks, "It is worth while observing, as an indication that in such cases of local colouring Shakespeare had probably London in his mind, that in the year 1588 the Mayor and Corporation of the City petitioned the Queen that they might build four corn mills on the river Thames, near the bridge, and the masters of the Trinity House certified that the erection of these mills 'on the south side of the Thames upon the Starlings above the bridge' would breed no annoyance. The 'city mills' therefore in Shakespeare's time were close to the Globe Theatre," i.e. the theatre in which Shakespeare's plays were brought out.

32. How the world goes, how matters stand.

32, 3. that to the pace ... journey, so that I may accommodate myself to circumstances : I shall, see note on i. 9. 78.

## ACT. II. SCENE I.

1. augurer, the form used by Shakespeare except in *Sonn.* cvii. 6, *Phoenix and Turtle*, 7. An augur was a priest at Rome who interpreted the will of the gods, from the flight and singing of birds; though in later times auguries were derived from various other signs than those given by birds. The augurs did not foretell future events, but simply announced that certain signs were favourable or unfavourable, and taught what was to be done or not to be done.

3. Not according ... people, not such as you plebeians desire; an indirect way of saying 'good from my point of view, bad from yours.'

6. who does ... love? do you mean to say that the wolf loves any one? For instances of the uninflected *who*, see Abb. § 274.

8. Ay, to devour him, in one way he may be said to love him, the way of devouring him.

10. that baes ... bear, whose cry is like the growl of a bear, not the bleating of a lamb; baes, cries 'ba.'

11. **lives like a lamb**, lives as peaceable and harmless a life as, etc.

12. **shall ask**, am about to ask.

14, 5. **In what ... abundance?** is there any great fault of which Marcius has some small share in which you two do not richly abound? For instances of the double preposition, see Abb. § 407.

16. **stored**, richly endowed with.

18. **topping**, exceeding, outdoing.

20. **censured**, estimated; see note on i. 1. 258: **of**, by: **o' the ... file**, us the aristocrats; probably with an allusion to the fact that the Government party in the House of Commons sit on the right hand of the Speaker.

23, 4. **Because ... angry?** since you were just speaking of pride, you won't be angry at what I am about to say, will you?

25. **Well ... well**, said with great impatience at the idea of being taken to task.

26, 7. **Why ... patience**, there's no need for you to be so crusty, it is but a trifle I was about to mention; though for that matter it is evident that the smallest provocation is enough to exhaust your patience pretty well; for **thief of occasion**, occasion being itself the thief, cp. *R. J.* i. 3. 86, "written in the margent *of* his eyes," the eyes being the margin; *R. II.* i. 3. 196, "Banish'd this frail sepulchre *of* our flesh," the flesh being itself the sepulchre.

27, 8. **give your ... pleasures**, pray don't hesitate to give a loose to your inclinations, but indulge your anger as freely as you please; **dispositions, pleasures**, the plural used where we should now use the singular, to express the disposition, pleasure, of more than one person.

28, 9. **at the least ... so**, I say 'at your pleasures,' in case it is a pleasure to you to be angry.

31. **We do ... alone**, we are not the only persons who do so.

32. **I know ... alone**, Menenius, catching up the words, pretends to understand them in the sense of doing a thing of their own motion, unaided.

33. **single**, with a play on the word in the senses of (1) alone, (2) silly, purposeless; cp. ii. *H. IV.* i. 2. 207, "is not your voice broken? your wind short? your chin double? your wit *single*?"

35-7. **O that ... selves!** "with allusion to the fable which says that every man has a bag hanging before him, in which he puts his neighbours' faults, and another behind him in which he stows his own" (Johnson).

38. **What then, sir?** what would be the result if we were to do so?

39. **unmeriting, worthless.**

40. **testy, headstrong;** O. F. *teste*, head, mod. F. *tête* : **alias fools**, or, in other words, fools ; or, I might say, fools.

43. **humorous**, light-hearted, merry ; full of quips and jests ; cp. ii. *H. IV.* iv. 4. 34, "Now I perceive the devil understands Welsh ; And 'tis no marvel he's so *humorous*."

44. **with not ... Tiber**, without a drop of water to qualify it ; Steevens points out that Lovelace, in his *Verses to Althea from Prison*, has borrowed this expression, "When flowing cups run swiftly round With no *allaying Thames*."

45. 6. **said to be ... complaint**, commonly reported to have the failing of deciding in favour of the first complainant, without waiting to hear the other side ; **tinder-like**, quick to catch fire (figuratively) : **motion**, provocation, incitement.

47, 8. **one that ... morning**, "rather a late lier down than an early riser" (Johnson) ; Malone quotes *L. L. L.* v. 1. 94, "It is the king's most sweet pleasure and affection to congratulate the princess at her pavilion in the *posteriors of this day*, which the rude multitude call the afternoon," said by the pedant Holofernes ; **converses**, like *conversation*, used in Shakespeare's day in the wider sense of *associate with*. Cp. *M. V.* iii. 4. 12, "for in companions That do *converse* and waste the time together."

49. **spend ... breath**, though perhaps too ready to fly into a passion, yet forgetting my anger immediately : **wealsmen**, such careful guardians of the public welfare ; said sarcastically, of course.

50. **I cannot ... Lycurguses**, I wish I could say you are as wise as Lycurgus, but I can't ; Lycurgus, the celebrated Spartan lawgiver.

50-2. **if the drink ... it**, if the language you use to me irritates me, I cannot help showing my irritation.

52-4. **I can't say ... syllables**, when I find the mark of the ass so conspicuous in your conversation, I can't pretend to compliment you on the wisdom of your pronouncements.

55. **reverend grave men**, a common formula of respect ; cp. ii. 2. 39, "Most *reverend and grave* elders" ; *Oth.* i. 3. 76, "Most potent, *grave, and reverend* signiors."

56. **lie deadly**, tell a terrible lie : **good, honest**.

56-9. **If you see ... too?** if what I have described myself as being is evident to you, does it follow that I, like you, am well known to every one ? further, if I am well enough known, what is there



in this character of mine that your purblind vision can discern as being objectionable? The old man is much nettled by the taunt that he is well enough known, and dwells on it with angry iteration. For **map of my microcosm**, *i.e.* the little world of a man's nature seen in his appearance, as the material world is seen in a map, cp. *Lear*. iii. 1. 10, "Strives in *his little world of man* to outscorn The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain," *i.e.* with his own weak body; ii. *H. IV.* iv. 3. 118, "the face, which as a beacon gives warning to all the rest of *this little kingdom, man*"; **bisson**, *M. E. bisen*, purblind, *A. S. bisen*; **conspectuities**, a coinage of Shakespeare's from Lat. *conspectus*, sight.

60. **Come ... enough**, come, come, it's no good talking in this way, we know well enough what kind of man you are.

62. **ambitious ... legs**, you think it a fine thing to have poor wretches taking off their caps and bowing low before you; cp. *Tim.* iii. 6. 107, "*Cap and knee slaves*, vapours, and minute-jacks!"

63. **a good ... afternoon**, a whole afternoon that might be turned to much better account.

64. **orangewife**, an old crone who sells oranges; so we still speak of a 'fishwife,' not in the most complimentary sense; **fosset-seller**, a seller of trifles like spigots to be inserted in casks; now spelt *faucet*.

64, 5. **and then ... audience**, and then adjourn to a further hearing a trumpety cause of dispute, a dispute that any sensible man would settle in five minutes; **rejournal**, Lat. *re-*, back, and O. F. *journee*, Mod. F. *ournée*, a morning.

68. **mummers**, maskers, buffoons; from "O. F. *mommeur*, a mummer ... The origin is imitative, from the sound *mum* or *mom*, used by nurses to frighten children, like the E. *bo!* See Wedgwood, who refers to the habit of nurses who wish to frighten or amuse children, and for this purpose cover their faces and say *mum!* or *bo!* whence the notion of masking to give amusement" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*). **set up ... patience**, declare war against all patience, utterly scout the idea of listening with any patience; cp. *J. C.* v. 1. 14, "Their *bloody sign* of battle is hung out." So, Tamburlaine when about to besiege a town used on the first day white tents, arms, etc.; on the second, if the town was not yielded, these were changed for others "red or scarlet"; and on the third, if obstinacy still prevailed, black was the hue of all his accoutrements, etc.

69. **dismiss ... bleeding**, send the disputants away without any attempt to heal their quarrel. The metaphor from war is carried on.

70. **the more**, in a state of still greater confusion in consequence of your foolish meddling; **the**, ablative of the demonstrative pronoun, see Abb. § 94.



70, 1. **all the peace ... knaves**, the only show you make of adjusting the difference between the two parties consisting in your impartially scolding both.

73-5. **you are well ... Capitol**, everyone knows that you have a much better right to a seat at a dinner table, where your sallies of wit are welcomed, than to a seat on a bench of justice, where your decisions are laughed at; that your presence can be more easily dispensed with on the bench than at the dinner table; on the comparative inflection, see Abb. § 7.

76. **Our very ... mockers**, even our priests, whose office implies the most solemn gravity of countenance, will be unable to resist laughing.

77-9. **When you ... beards**, even when your utterances are least impertinent to the matter, they give no excuse for the solemn wagging of your beards with which they are accompanied, *i.e.* are nothing to be in the least proud of.

80, 1. **to stuff ... pack-saddle**, as to serve for the padding of the seat of a cobbler, or of the saddle of that beast of burden, the ass; **botcher**, the primary notion of botching is beating, then from fastening by beating it comes to mean repairing in a rough manner; cp. *T. N.* i. 5. 51, "if he mend, he is no longer dishonest; if he cannot, let the *botcher* mend him. Anything that's mended is but patched"; for hair used for stuffing, cp. *M. A.* iii. 2. 47, "The old ornament of his cheek (*i.e.* his beard and whiskers) hath already stuffed tennis-balls": **pack-saddle**, saddle on which the goods are packed that the ass has to carry.

81. **Yet you must be saying**, yet you cannot restrain yourselves from saying.

82. **in a cheap estimation**, to value him at the lowest possible figure.

83. **since Deucalion**, since the flood; Deucalion, king of Phthia in Thessaly, and his wife, Pyrrha, were on account of their piety saved in a boat when during a nine days' flood Zeus destroyed the race of men in consequence of the impiety of Lycaon, king of Arcadia.

83, 4. **though ... hangmen**, even though one should pay you the extravagant compliment of supposing that some of them held so high a position as that of hereditary hangman; cp. *Cymb.* ii. 3. 132-6, "Thou wert dignified enough ... if 'twere made Comparative for your virtues, to be styled The under-*hangman* of his kingdom, and hated For being preferr'd so well." The office of executioner has at all times been naturally held in aversion, and here the stigma is made all the greater by the inference that generations of the family were content with such an occupation, and did not even care to aim at one of a nobler kind.

84. **God-den**, good evening, farewell ; literally God give you good even, and found in the forms 'God dig you den,' 'God gi' god-den,' 'God ye god-den' ; a salutation used after noon was past.

84, 5. **your worships**, giving them the title with ironical courtesy.

85, 6. **more ... plebeians**, to listen to more of the conversation of fellows like you, drovers to the herd of such animals as the plebeians, would drive me mad ; for instances of the participle with the pronoun implied, as here with **being**, see Abb. § 379 ; **herdsmen**, cp. i. 4. 31, iii. 1. 33, iii. 2. 32. There may here, as Johnson supposes, be an allusion to the title of "shepherd of the people" given by Homer to kings ; but, if so, it is of course ironical : **I will be bold**, I will venture ; again with ironical courtesy.

88-90. **How now, ... fast ?** what, my fair and noble ladies,—noble as the moon, if she were among earthly things,—makes you look with such eager eyes towards something you are evidently expecting ? **noble**, sc. in your chastity, the moon being the goddess of chastity, Diana.

94, 5. **and with ... approbation**, coming home, and coming home covered with glory on account of his success.

96. **Take ... Jupiter**, "he throws up his cap into the air, Jupiter being especially the god of the sky" (Wright) : **and I thank thee, and my gratitude also**.

98. **Nay**, used as a particle of confirmation.

99. **the state**, the Senate.

100. **at home**, awaiting you at your house.

102. **I will ... to-night**, I will drink to Marcius's health till the very house reels with the intoxication of joy ; cp. *A. C.* ii. 7. 124, "Cup us, till the world go round."

105, 6. **it gives ... health**, the news gives me a long lease of health : **in which time**, during which time : **make a lip at**, laugh at, snap my fingers at ; cp. *Hamlet*. iv. 4. 50, "Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd *Makes mouths at* the invisible event" ; so, *T. C.* iii. 1. 152, "He *hangs the lip at* something," i.e. in dejection.

107. **sovereign**, supremely efficacious ; cp. i. *H. IV.* i. 3. 57, "And telling me the *sovereign'st* thing on earth Was parmaceti for an inward bruise" : Galen, the famous Greek physician, a native of Pergamum, A.D. 130 : of course an anachronism : **empiricute**, Ingleby, *Shakespeare Hermeneutics*, pp. 36, 7, acutely suggests that this word "belongs to a very definite class of misprints, which we may call *duplicative* ... This is an error ... [which] exemplifies the tendency of writers and compositors to repeat

some syllable in a word which is susceptible of two forms of spelling: as, in this case, with a *qu*, or a *ck*." Of such duplicatives he quotes as instances observed by himself, *Respective* for *respective*; *axiomomata* for *axiomata*; *Aurorora* for *Aurora*; *Blakelesley* for *Blakesley*; *Thackerary* for *Thackeray*; *Concannon Street* for *Cannon Street*; *puriritie* for *puritie*; and still more to the point, *prognostiqukys* for *pronostiques*.

108. **to this**, compared to this; a use of the preposition very common in Shakespeare: **of no better report**, not worth more than: **a horsedrench**, what we now call a bran-mash, a mixture of malt or bran with hot water, given to sick or overworked horses; cp. *H. V.* iii. 5. 19, "A *drench* for sur-reined jades."

109. **Is he not wounded?** surely he must have brought home some wounds? he was not likely to fight without getting wounded.

113. **if it ... much**, so long as his wounds are not dangerous ones.

113, 4. **brings a' ... pocket?** Merenius speaks as though victory so completely belonged to Marcius that he carried it about with him, as he would carry his handkerchief in his pocket; **a'**, both *a* and *ha* are found in Old English and were used not only for *he*, but for *she*, *it*, *they*: **become**, suit, adorn.

115. **On's brows**, not in his pocket, says Volumnia, humorously correcting Menenius, but on his forehead, where he wears the chaplet of oak leaves.

117. **disciplined**, beaten; chastised as though he were a boy; cp. *M. N. D.* i. 1. 116, "I have some private *schooling* for you both.

120. **'twas ... too**, it was well for him that he escaped then.

121. **an**, see Abb. § 101: **stayed by him**, continued to face him: **fidiused**, beaten as he would have beaten Aufidius; for proper names converted into verbs, cp. *M. W.* iv. 2. 193, "*Mrs. Page*. Come, Mother Prat; come give me your hand. *Ford*. "I'll *prat* her"; *A. Y. L.* iv. 3. 39, "She *Phebes* me," addresses me as Phebe.

123. **possessed**, acquainted; as very frequently in Shakespeare.

126. **name**, renown, glory; cp. *Cymb.* i. 4. 3, "expected to prove so worthy as since he hath been allowed the *name* of."

128. **there's**, for the inflection in *s* before a plural subject, see Abb. § 335.

129, 30. **and not ... purchasing**, and none of them that he has not well earned; cp. *R. II.* i. 3. 282, "I sent thee forth to *purchase* honour."

132. **pow, wow, pooh, pooh**; nonsense, there's no doubt of that.



135. **he has ... proud**, a short time ago you were jeering at his pride, now he has more reason for it than ever.

138. **cicatrices**, scars.

139. **his place**, the consulship which he expects to obtain : in the ... **Tarquin**, in the battle of the Lake Regillus fought against Tarquinius Superbus, who was expelled in consequence of his various acts of despotism, and more than once with the aid of the Latins and the Etruscans endeavoured to regain his throne.

141. 2. **One ... know**, Menenius begins to enumerate his wounds, and then, breaking off, says I can personally speak to nine.

145. 6. **every gash ... grave**, for every wound he received, he slew an enemy.

147. **These are ... Marcius**, these trumpets are the customary heralds of Marcius's approach ; **ushers**, O. F. *uissier*, Lat. *ostiaris*, a door-keeper.

149. **nervy**, sinewy ; see note on i. 1. 128. Grant White believes ll. 149, 50 to be spurious, and they certainly do not sound like Shakespeare.

150. **Which ... die**, which he has only to lift and then as it falls, men die.

STAGE DIRECTION. **sennet**, a particular set of notes on the trumpet or cornet ; origin unknown. Sen? net  
= Seven n

152. **Corioli gates**, for this conversion of one part of speech to another, see Abb. § 22.

153. **to**, in addition to : **these**, *sc.* names.

161. **My gentle ... Caius**, in l. 153 the folios read *Marcus Caius*, which Rowe transposed ; and here I have made the same transposition, not so much because this was the regular order of the names, but because the epithet **gentle** is more appropriate to the personal name, **worthy** to the name derived from the clan. It is as though Volumnia said, My son, so gentle to me, so well worthy of the race to which you belong.

162. **deed-achieving honour**, honour won by deeds ; cp. *A. C.* iii. 13. 77, "his *all-obeying* breath," *i.e.* his breath which all obeyed ; and see Abb. § 372.

164. **But, O, thy wife !** but see, here is your wife to welcome you : **My gracious silence**, abstract for concrete ; cp. *A. C.* i. 1. 40, "Excellent *falsehood* !", addressed to Antony ; *K. J.* iii. 4. 36, "O fair *affliction*, peace !" ; **gracious**, lovely ; cp. *T. N.* i. 5. 281, "And in dimension and the shape of nature A *gracious* person" : **hail**, health to you ; a common salutation ; *A.S.* *hael*, health.



165, 6. **Wouldst thou ... triumph?** would you, who weep at my return in triumph, have laughed to see me brought home dead? Merely a fond reproach for the tears of joy that kept her silent.

167. **Such eyes,** *i.e.* so full of tears.

168. **lack sons,** have lost sons in the war.

169. **And live you yet?** said jestingly to his faithful old friend, Do you mean to say you are still alive? **pardon,** *sc.* for his not having greeted her before.

170. **I know ... turn,** there are so many I should wish to welcome that I hardly know which to turn to first.

173. **light and heavy,** joyous and sad; joyous at seeing those returned, sad at missing so many that went forth to the war.

174, 5. **A curse ... thee!** if there is any one not glad to see you returning safe, may a curse light on his heart from its very bottom and blast it altogether! **at root,** for the omission of the definite article in adverbial forms, see Abb. § 143; **on's,** of his.

176. **should,** ought to: **dote,** be fond even to foolishness: **by the faith of men,** assuredly; in *Oth.* i. l. 10, we have "by the faith of *man*."

177, 8. **We have ... relish,** there are among us certain sour-tempered old fellows that will not be brought to be in sympathy with you; will not assimilate with you as a tree which is grafted with a new variety assimilates its fruit to that of the graft inserted in its stem; cp. *W. T.* iv. 4. 92-4, "We ... make conceive a bark of baser kind By bud of nobler race"; of course the **crab-trees** here are the tribunes.

178. **Yet welcome, warriors,** but never mind them, it matters nothing what they think or feel.

179, 80. **We call ... folly,** we do not trouble ourselves to be angry with a nettle that stings us, or to use strong language about the faults of fools; we accept their nature for what it is.

181. **Menenius ever, ever,** always the same humorous old fellow; ever himself; Tyrwhitt compares *J. C.* v. l. 63, where in answer to an angry speech by Cassius, Antony only says, "Old Cassius still!"

182. **Give way there, make way there,** you fellows; clear the road.

185. **change of honours,** "*variety of honours*"; as change of rayment, among the writers of that time, signified *variety* of rayment" (Warburton); cp. *T. S.* iv. 3. 57, "With ruffs and cuffs and fardingales and things; With scarfs and fans and double *change* of bravery," *i.e.* of fine clothes.

187, 8. **To see ... fancy,** to see my dearest wishes granted, and the castles I built in the air become substantial realities; for

**inherited**, = enjoyed, possessed, cp. *R. J.* i. 2. 30, "even such delight Among fresh female buds shall you this night *Inherit* at my house."

190. **cast upon thee**, eagerly offer you ; *sc.* the consulship.

191. **in my way**, according to my idea of the fitness of things.

192. **sway with**, rule in partnership with.

193. **the bleared sights**, dim-sighted old men.

194. **Are spectacled**, have put on their spectacles : **your**, for this colloquial use of **your**, see note on i. 1. 118.

195. **a rapture**, a paroxysm, fit : Steevens compares *The Hospital for London's Follies*, 1602, "Your darling will weep itself into a *rapture*." Ingleby accepts the conjecture *rupture*, and supports it by quoting *Phioravante's Secrets*, 1582, "To helpe yong Children of the Rupture. The Rupture is caused two waies, the one through weaknesse of the place, and the other through much crying" ; but it is difficult to believe that Shakespeare would employ such coarse realism.

196. **While ... him**, I have followed Keightley in inserting of before **him**, not merely because *to chat* a person has not been paralleled by any quotation, but because without the preposition the emphasis is thrown upon **him** in a way that seems impossible : **kitchen malkin**, kitchen wench, scullery maid ; **malkin**, "The diminutive of *Mal* (Mary), a contemptuous term for a coarse wench" (Dyce, *Gloss.*).

197. **Her richest lockram**, her finest neck-kerchief, *i.e.* decks herself out in her best ; **lockram**, "a cheap kind of linen—*F. locrenan* ... named from the place in Brittany where it is manufactured" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*) : **reechy**, begrimed with the smoke of the kitchen ; a weakened form of *reeky*.

198. **stalls**, sheds outside shops, in which goods were exposed for sale ; **bulks**, frame works projecting from the front of a shop, much the same as stalls. Wright gives a capital illustration of the two words from Defoe's *History of the Plague in London*, "During the interval the master of the house took his opportunity to break a large hole through his shop into a bulk or stall, where formerly a cobbler had sat before or under his shop window." Stalls are still seen on market-days, though generally in the open market-place.

199. **Are smother'd up**, are crowded so as to be completely hidden ; **leads**, the lead-roofed tops of houses ; **ridges**, the wedge-shaped roofs, as opposed to the flat ones : **horsed**, bestridden.

200. **With variable ... agreeing**, with men of every shade of character, but all, in spite of their dissimilarity, agreed in one object ; for **complexions**, Wright compares *Hamlet* i. 4. 27, "By

the overgrowth of some *complexion*. Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason." So, ii. 3. 16-18, the Third Citizen in answer to the charge against Coriolanus of having called the plebeians "the many-headed multitude," says, "We have been called so of many; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some auburn, some bald, but that *our wits are so diversely coloured*."

201. **seld-shown**, that rarely show themselves in public; **seld**, according to Skeat, an adverbial form from a Teutonic adjective *selda*, = rare, strange, found in such compounds as *seld-cuth*, rare, *seld-sine*, seldom seen. The adverb alone occurs in *T. C.* iv. 5. 150 "As *seld* I have the chance": **flamens**, priests devoted to the service of one particular god, ultimately fifteen in number, and regarded as especially sacred.

202. **among ... throngs**, *i.e.* which on ordinary occasions they would have shunned as contaminating them: **puff**, are out of breath from their exertions.

203. **a vulgar station**, a standing place such as those occupied by ordinary spectators.

203-6. **our veil'd dames ... kisses**, our high-born ladies, usually so careful to shade their faces, now in their excitement leave their dainty cheeks, in which the pure white and brilliant crimson contend for supremacy, to be rifled of their charms by the burning kisses of wanton Phœbus; in plain language, risk ruining their complexion by going about in the sun without their veils; **nicely-gawded**, daintily adorned, *sc.* with pink and white. Steevens compares Massinger's *Great Duke of Florence*, v. 3. 85, 6, "*The lilies Contending with the roses in her cheek*"; and *T. S.* iv. 5. 50, "*Such war of white and red within her cheeks*."

206. **such a pother**, such is the turmoil, excitement.

207-9. **As if ... posture**, as if that god, whoever it be that attends him through life, had cunningly made himself incarnate in Marcius and endowed him with every grace of movement; for the ellipsis of *it be* after **god**, see Abb. § 286. Malone compares *Sonn.* xxvi. 9, 10, "*Till whatsoever star that guides thy moving Points on me graciously with fair aspect*"; **human powers**, the capabilities which he as a man possesses. The idea that men were accompanied through life by good and evil spirits is a very old one, and is several times alluded to by Shakespeare. In *A. C.* ii. 3. 19-22, where Plutarch is closely followed, Antony's demon, or angel, exercises the same active influence as here; "Thy demon, that's thy spirit which keeps thee, is Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable, Where Cæsar's is not; but, near him, thy angel Becomes a fear as being o'erpower'd."

209, 10. **On the sudden ... consul**, on the spur of the moment, carried away by enthusiasm at his exploits, they will, without doubt, elect him to the consulship.



210, 11. **Then our ... sleep**, then, during the tenure of his office, our functions may be content to remain in abeyance; cp. *M. M.* v. 1. 301, "*Good night to your redress!*"; *Temp.* iv. 1. 54, "be more abstemious, Or else, *good night* your vow!"

212, 13. **He cannot ... end**, it will be impossible for a man of his nature to bear from first to last the honours laid upon him, without giving way to an arrogance which will cause a revulsion of feeling against him; **From where ... end**, from the point at which he ought to begin to wear them with modesty to the point up to which he ought to continue so to wear them. For the construction, Malone compares *Cymb.* iii. 2. 63-6, "but first of all, How we may steal from hence, and for the gap That we shall make in time, *from our hence-going And our return*, to excuse."

214-19. **Doubt not ... do't**, you may be assured that the plebeians, whom we represent, prompted by their former ill-will towards him, will, if the least cause be given, speedily forget that they have laid these new honours upon him; and that he will give them such cause is as certain to my mind as that his pride would enjoy doing so. For the redundant pronoun **they**, see Abb. § 414; **Upon**, as a consequence of; cp. *M. A.* iv. 1. 225, "When he shall hear she died *upon* his words."

220. **Were he to stand**, if it should be his lot to become a candidate.

221. **Appear i' the market place**, present himself in the forum, as it was customary for candidates to do when canvassing for votes.

222. **The napless ... humility**, the threadbare toga worn by candidates to signify that they humbly sought the approval of the electors. This is from Plutarch; "For the custom of Rome was at that time, that such as did sue for any office, should for certain days before be in the market-place, only with a poor gown on their backs, and without any coat underneath, to pray the citizens to remember them at the day of election; which was thus devised, either to move the people the more by requesting them in such mean apparel, or else because they might show them their wounds they had gotten in the wars in the service of the commonwealth, as manifest marks and testimonies of their valiantness" (Skeat, *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, p. 14).

223. **as the manner is**, as is customary.

224. **their stinking breaths**, their breaths which he called stinking; cp. *J. C.* 1. 2. 246-9, "the rabblement ... threw up their sweaty night-caps and uttered such a deal of *stinking breath*"; 'Tis right, 'tis as you say; I quite agree with you.

225. **miss it**, lose it, etc., the consulship; though **it** here and in the next line may be used indefinitely.



226, 7. **but by ... nobles**, unless the gentlefolk entreated him to accept the honour, and the nobles expressed a like desire ; so far from deigning to solicit others, he would require to be solicited himself to become a candidate.

227-9. **I wish ... execution**, nothing could be more in keeping with my wishes than that he should persist in such a determination, and carry it into action ; for the omission and subsequent insertion of *to*, see Abb. § 350.

229. **like**, probable.

230, 1. **It shall ... destruction**, such a procedure on his part, like our efforts in the same direction, will be certain to ensure his ruin ; **good wills**, earnest endeavours ; cp. above, i. 9. 18, ii. *H. IV.* iii. 2. 167, "I will do my *good will*, sir : you can have no more." Mason takes **wills** as a verb, explaining "as our advantage requires," and Delius thinks this the more plausible view.

231, 2. **So it ... authorities**, such (*viz.* ruin) must be the result either to him or to the exercise of our powers ; two such antagonistic forces cannot exist together, one or other must give way : **For an end**, as a means to effect our object.

233. **We must ... people**, we must take care to put it into the minds of the people ; for **suggest** = prompt, cp. *R. II.* i. 1. 101, "he did ... *Suggest* his soon-believing adversaries."

234. **still**, ever : **to's power**, up to his power, so far as his ability went ; see Abb. § 187.

235. **Have ... mules**, have treated them as the lowest kind of beasts of burden : **their pleaders**, those who advocated their cause.

236. **Dispropertied their freedoms**, stripped them of such privileges as were particularly their own.

237. **In human ... capacity**, so far as concerns any capacity to act like men.

238. **Of no more ... world**, as being endowed with no more intelligence or fitness for the management of affairs.

239-41. **who have ... them**, who are supplied with food merely that they may have strength to bear their burdens, and are cruelly beaten when they sink under them ; **provand**, from "*F. provende*, provender ... — Lat. *præbenda*, a payment ; in late Lat. a daily allowance of provisions ... Feminine of *præbendus*, passive future participle of *præbere*, to afford, give" (*Skeat, Ety. Dict.*).

241. **This ... suggested**, such a suggestion as this.

243. **touch**, gall, irritate.

243, 4. **which time .. upon't**, and an occasion for this is certain to offer if he be instigated to a display of his arrogance.

244. 5. **and that's ... sheep**, and it will be as easy so to instigate him as to set dogs to worry sheep.

245. 6. **will be ... stubble**, will be the spark to set ablaze their wrath even now as ready to take fire as dry stubble.

247. **darken him**, obscure his glory.

249. **shall be consul**, is certain to be elected consul.

251. **gloves**, as evidences of their favour.

252. **scarfs and handkerchers**, "here our author has attributed some of the customs of his own age to a people who were wholly unacquainted with them. Few men of fashion in his time appeared at a tournament without a lady's favour upon his arm; and sometimes when a nobleman had tilted with uncommon grace and agility, some of the fair spectators used to *fling a scarf or glove* 'upon him as he pass'd'" (Malone): **handkerchers**, a corrupted form of *handkerchiefs*, a word made up of *hand*, and *F. couvre chef*, covering for the head.

255. **A shower ... shouts**, a shower by throwing up their caps, thunder by their shouting; tempestuously applauded him. For the construction, cp. *A. C.* iv. 12. 8, 9, "His fretted fortunes give him hope, and fear, Of what he has, and has not."

257. 8. **carry ... event**, keep our senses on the alert to judge how matters go, with courage ready to act accordingly: **Have with you**, expressing his readiness to go with him and follow his example. So Shakespeare has, "have after," "have to," "have through," "have at," with the ellipsis of "let me," "let us."

## SCENE II.

3. **of every one**, by every one; see Abb. § 168.

4. **carry it**, succeed; **it**, used indefinitely.

5. **vengeance proud**, terribly proud; so we still use such expressions colloquially as 'true, with a vengeance,' using a preposition to give the adverbial force which here is elliptical.

7. **Faith**, assuredly; literally, in faith.

9. **they know not wherefore**, without being able to give any reason for their love.

13. **in their disposition**, of their real character; for **in**, = about, cp. *Mach.* iii. 1. 49, "Our fears *in* Banquo Stick deep": **out of ... carelessness**, as a consequence of that magnanimity which does not allow itself to be troubled with trifles. For the ellipsis of the nominative here, see Abb. § 399.

16. **he waved ... 'twixt**, he would have wavered, shown himself indifferent, as to whether, etc. For the simple form of the subjunctive where nothing but the context (in the case of past tenses) shows that it is the subjunctive, see Abb. § 361, and cp. below, iv. 6. 112.

16, 7. **'twixt ... harm**, a confusion of constructions between **'twixt doing them good or harm** and **'twixt two courses**, with the result of doing them neither good nor harm.'

17, 8. **but he seeks ... him**, but he shows a greater eagerness to obtain their hatred than they can show eagerness to bestow it on him.

19. **may fully ... opposite**, may show in the plainest possible manner that he is an enemy to them; for **opposite**, = adversary, cp. *Hamlet*. v. 2. 62, "Between the pass and fell incensed points Of mighty *opposites*"; *Lear*, v. 3. 153, "By the law of arms thou wast not bound to answer An unknown *opposite*."

20. **malice**, hatred, ill-will.

21. **to flatter them**, namely, flattering them.

23. **at those**, as that of those.

24. **bonneted**, took off their caps with humble gesture; cp. *Othello*. i. 2. 23, "my demerits May speak *unbonneted* to as proud a fortune As this that I have reach'd," i.e. without taking off my bonnet. Knight takes the word to mean 'put on their caps,' i.e. as if they had done enough towards winning the popular favour.

24-6. **without ... report**, unlike a hero such as Marcius, having performed no exploits to bring them into honour with the people, and purchase their good report; for **to have ... into**, cp. *M. N. D.* iii. 1. 174, "To *have* my love *to* bed and *to* arise."

26, 7. **but he ... eyes**, but he, on the contrary, has so firmly fixed his honourable qualities before their eyes; cp. *A. W.* i. 2. 53-5, "his plausible words He scatter'd not in ears but *grafted* them To grow there and to bear."

28, 9. **were ... injury**, would be to show him not only injustice but ingratitude also; for the difference between *un-*, and *in-*, in composition, see Abb. § 442: **otherwise**, contrary to the fact.

30. **pluck**, forcibly pull down.

STAGE DIRECTION. **Lictors**, public officers who attended on the chief Roman magistrates. They had to inflict punishment on condemned persons, to enforce proper respect being shown to a magistrate passing by, to clear the road, etc. As a symbol of their office they carried *fusces*, rods bound in the form of a bundle, and containing an axe in the middle, the head of which was turned outwards.



34. of, in regard to.

36. As ... after-meeting, as the chief purpose of this further assembly.

37. his, of him; *his*, *her*, etc., being the genitive of *he*, *she*, etc., may stand as the antecedent of a relative.

38. stood for, stood forth in defence of; cp. *H. V. i. 2. 101*, "*Stand for your own; unwind your bloody flag*": **please you**, be pleased, to be so good as to.

39. Most ... elders, see note on ii. 1. 55.

41. In our ... successes, in the successes we were fortunate enough to obtain over the enemy; 'we still use **well-found**, but only in the sense of well equipped, as, for instance, 'a well-found ship.' In this sense Shakespeare uses it in *A. W. ii. 1. 105*, "In what he did profess, *well-found*," i.e. skilled in his profession, or, *well-seen*, as was the commoner phrase. Schmidt here interprets **well-found** as "found to be as great as they were reported." For *successes*, see note on i. 1. 250.

44. We met, we should now say 'we *have* met'; but here the action is regarded as past without reference to the present.

44, 5. to remember ... himself, to show our remembrance of his exploits by paying him the honours he has so worthily won; cp. *M. A. i. 1. 13*, "Much deserved on his part and equally *remembered* by Don Pedro," the prince of Arragon.

46. for length, on account of length; do not be afraid of wearying us by dwelling on them at too great a length.

46-8. make ... out, by your relation of his services lead us to think it is rather that the resources of the state are inadequate to reward him than that we are wanting in the will to make those rewards extend commensurately to his deserts; for **stretch**, cp. *A. W. ii. 1. 4*, "if both gain, all The gift doth *stretch* itself as 'tis received, And is enough for both."

49. We do ... ears, we earnestly beg of you to listen to us with your utmost good will.

49-51. and after ... here, and afterwards, after hearing what we have to say, to use your most persuasive efforts with the people to ratify what meets with the assent of this assembly; for **yield**, cp. *L. L. L. ii. 1. 151, 2*, "were not his requests so far From reason's *yielding*, your fair self should make A *yielding* 'gainst some reason in my breast"; for **passes**, = receives sanction, cp. *H. V. v. 2. 372*, "Nor this I have not, brother, so denied, But your request shall make me let it *pass*." So, transitively below, iii. 1. 29, "Hath he not *passed* the noble and the common?"

51, 2. We are ... treaty, the agreement we are called together to consider, is a pleasing one to us; for **convented**, cp. *H. VIII.*



v. 1. 52, "hath commanded... to the council-board He be *con-vented*"; for *treaty*, *K. J.* ii. 1. 481. "Why answer not the double majesties This friendly *treaty* of our threatened town?"

54. The theme, him who is the subject of these deliberations; so, *A. C.* ii. 2. 44, Antony is spoken of as the "word of war." Here Warburton, ever eager to correct Shakespeare and display his own learning, points out that till the passing of the *Lex Atinia*, B.C. 130, the tribunes were not allowed to enter the Senate.

54-7. Which the rather ... at, and to this inclination (to honour Marcius) we shall be all the more ready to yield if he on his part will be mindful to show that he has a more generous estimate of the people than he has hitherto evidenced; for *blest to do*, i.e. be happy to do, Wright compares *K. J.* iii. 1. 251, "and then we shall be *blest To do* your pleasure and continue friends."

57. That's off, that's off, that's nothing to do with the matter; your remark is quite out of place.

60. more pertinent, *sc.* to the matter; more in point.

61. your people, the people whose cause you so persistently urge.

62. But tie ... bedfellow, but you must not expect him to be bosom friends with them. In former days the custom of men sleeping together was not uncommon, and Cromwell is said by Clarendon to have derived much of his intelligence during the civil wars from common soldiers who were his bedfellows. So, *H. V.* ii. 2. 8, Exeter speaking of Scroop's treachery to the king, says, "Nay, but the man that was his *bedfellow*."

63. keep your place, sit still.

64. never shame, never be ashamed; cp. *A. Y. L.* iv. 3. 136, "I do not *shame* to tell you what I was."

66, 7. I had ... them, I would much rather receive my wounds again and have to go through the process of their healing, than hear some one describe in terms of praise how I received them.

68. disbench'd you, caused you to leave your seat; cp. *Lear*, iii. 6. 40, "And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity, *Bench* by his side."

69. When blows ... words, often when I could not tear myself away from the delight of fighting, words (of compliment) have driven me off.

70. You soothed ... not, you used no flattery, and therefore did me no harm.

71. as they weigh, according to their deserts.

72. one ... sun, i.e. sit doing nothing.

73. when the ... struck, when the signal for battle was sounded.

74. To hear ... monster'd, to hear my poor endeavours magnified into something extraordinary; cp. *Lear*, i. 1. 223, "Sure her offence Must be of such unnatural degree, As *monsters* it."

75-8. Your multiplying ... hear it? how can you expect him to flatter this countless fry, the people, of whom not one in a thousand is worth anything, when you see that he would rather risk breaking his every limb in the pursuit of honour than expose one of his ears to the torture of listening to a narrative of his deeds; spawn, cp. *Macb.* iv. 2. 84, "Young fry of treachery!" The addition of multiplying intensifies the scorn of the expression, your people who are good at nothing but begetting progeny as worthless as themselves; on's, of his.

79. I shall lack voice, no words of mine are equal to the task.

82. Most ... haver, more ennobles the possessor than any other virtue could: if it be, if that be so.

84. Be singly counterpoised, find any one man his equal.

85. made a head, raised a force; see note on ii. 1. 138; for head, = armed force, cp. *K. J.* v. ii. 113, "Before I drew this gallant head of war"; and below, iii. 1. 1: for, to attack.

86. Beyond the mark of others, with a prowess to which others could not attain; the figure is from archery: our then dictator, for then, used as an adjective, see Abb. § 77.

88. Amazonian chin, beardless chin; with allusion to the valour of the Amazons.

89. bestrid, stood over to protect; cp. i. *H. IV.* v. 1. 122, "Hal, if you see me down in the battle and *bestride* me, so; 'tis a point of friendship."

90. o'erpress'd, attacked by more assailants than he could singly meet.

91. Tarquin's self, Tarquin himself; see Abb. § 20.

92. struck ... knee, struck him to his knee, as we should say; struck him a blow that brought him on his knees.

93. When he ... scene, when, being so young, he might without disgracing himself have shown the timidity of a woman; in Shakespeare's day and until the Restoration the parts of women were played by boys. Cp. *T. G.* iv. 4. 164, 5.

94. for his meed, as a reward for his valour.

95, 6. His pupil age ... thus, he in his minority having thus enrolled himself as a man; in *Man-enter'd* there is probably, as Wright points out, an allusion to the 'entering' of a student at a University, or at one of the Inns of Court, and in pupil age a further allusion to the *status pupillaris* of such student; cp. i. *H. IV.* ii. 4. 106, *Sonn.* xvi. 10: waxed, increased in daring.

97. the brunt, the shock of an onset.

98. **He lurch'd ... garland**, Malone explains **lurch'd** as from the substantive *lurch*, *F. lourche*, a game at cards, and to **lurch** as to win a maiden set (the verb according to Skeat being still used at cribbage). To this explanation, a writer in the *Ed. Rev.* objects that although "the noun is found in this technical sense in most European languages. there is no proof that the verb existed in English, nor, if it did, would it suit the context. Shakespeare evidently uses the verb *lurch* literally to devour eagerly, 'ravin up,' gulp down, and in the secondary sense to seize violently upon, rob, engross, absorb." In this sense, he says, the word was used, among others, by Bacon and Milton; and after quoting from Warner, "Hence country-louts *land-lurch* their lords," and "when Spayne would sceptres *lurch*," he adds, "To *lurch* all swords of the garland, means therefore not only to rob all swords of the garland, but to carry it away from them with an easy and victorious swoop." The origin of the verb and of the substantive may be, as is supposed, a different one; but is it quite possible that their meanings may have been mutually affected. Steevens quotes from Ben Johnson's *Silent Woman*, "you have *lurch'd* your friends of the better half of the garland": **For this last**, as regards this last engagement.

100. **I cannot ... home**, I cannot describe his valour in any adequate terms of praise; for **speak him**, cp. *Cymb.* i. 1. 24, "You *speak him* far"; for **home**, *Temp.* v. 1. 71, "I'll pay thy graces *home*."

101. **the coward**, used collectively.

102. **Turn ... sport**, treat what before seemed so terrible as a mere amusement: **weeds**, "used to signify the comparative feebleness of Coriolanus's adversaries" (Boswell).

103. **under sail**, going at full speed with all its sails set: **obey'd**, gave way before him.

104. **stem**, fore part of the vessel; carrying on the figure in the former line.

104, 5. **his sword ... took**, his sword, which was as the stamp of death, wherever it made its impression, did so fatally; for **took**, = had the intended effect, cp. *H. VIII.* iii. 2. 219, "yet I know A way, if it *take* right ... will bring me off again."

106. **a thing of blood**, a mass of blood; what in *Hamlet*. ii. 2. 479, is called "total gules."

107. **Was timed ... cries**, the cries of the dying kept time with each motion of his; were an accompaniment to every step he took, as a musical instrument accompanies singing or dancing.

108. **The mortal gate**, the gate round which death was raging.

108, 9. **which he painted ... destiny**, "The figure of his sword being death's stamp and marking his victim, is here carried on.



Coriolanus set his bloody mark upon the gate, or upon the city, indicating that it was his by an inevitable fate, as plague-stricken houses were painted with a red cross" (Wright); **painted** has been suspected and various emendations proposed, but Wright's explanation seems to me perfectly satisfactory, and the image quite in Shakespeare's way.

111. **like a planet**, Steevens quotes *Tim.* iv. 3. 108-10, "Be as a *planetary* plague, when Jove Will o'er some high-vic'd city hang his poison In the sick air"; but the supposed malignant influence of planets is frequently referred to in Shakespeare: **now all's his**, by this time he had made himself complete master of Corioli; the speaker puts himself into Coriolanus's position at the time of receiving the re-inforcement when he might be imagined to exclaim, 'Now all's mine!'

113. **His ready sense**, his hearing so quick to take in all sounds of fighting: **straight**, straightway, in an instant.

114. **Re-quicken'd ... fatigate**, put fresh life into such bodily energies as had become fatigued; the primary sense of *quick* is living, lively; **fatigate**, weary; from Lat. *fatigatus*, passive participle of *fatigare*, to weary.

115-7. **where he did ... spoil**, "Coriolanus is compared to a continuous stream of blood, which marked the course of his slaughtering sword. 'Spoil' appears to be a term of the chase here as it is in *J. C.* iii. 1. 206, 'Here thy hunters stand Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe'" (Wright).

118. **stood**, paused.

120, 1. **He cannot ... him**, whatever the honours we may devise for him, they are certain to fit him, as though they were a garment for which he had been measured; cp. *Ham.* iv. 7. 151, "Weigh what convenience both of time and means May *fit us to our shape*": **kick'd at**, rejected with contempt.

123. **The common ... world**, the merest filth.

124. **misery**, even the wretched; abstract for concrete.

124, 5. **rewards ... them**, finds sufficient reward for his deeds in doing them.

125, 6. **and is ... it**, and thinks of nothing but getting to the end of the time he has to spend in such work.

134. **the gown**, see note on ii. 1. 222.

136. **pass**, omit; cp. *K. J.* ii. 1. 258, "But if you fondly *pass* our proffered offer."

137. **Must ... voices**, must be allowed to give their votes in the election; cp. *H. VIII.* ii. 2. 94, "All the clerks ... *Have their free voices*": **bate**, abate, consent to forgo.

138. **jot**, the smallest portion; Gk. *ἰῶτα*, iota, the letter *i*,



the smallest in the Greek alphabet : **Put them not to't**, do not drive them into a strait by refusing to follow the usual custom ; cp. above, i. 1. 219.

140, 1. **Take ... form**, in order to obtain the honour you seek, accept the form which it is necessary for you to go through for that purpose.

142. **and might well**, and one that might well.

146. **for the hire**, in order to obtain the loan.

147. **breath**, voices in his favour : **stand upon 't**, insist upon being allowed to dispense with the usual custom.

148, 9. **We recommend ... them**, we in all kindness commit to you the duty of making known to the people our wishes in the matter.

153-5. **He will ... give**, he will ask them in a manner as if he scorned their being in a position to grant that which he desires of them ; for **require**, simply = *request*, cp. *H. VIII.* ii. 4. 144, "In humblest manner I *require* your highness That it shall please you to declare." Except in these passages and in *M. W.* i. 2. 10, Shakespeare uses the verb in this sense with an accusative of the thing asked for.

157. **attend**, await.

### SCENE III.

STAGE DIRECTION. **The Forum**, originally only a market-place, as it is called in this play, was a space of open ground between the Capitoline hill and the Velian ridge, used for public assemblies. As Rome became larger, several other *fora* were built, as the Forum Julium, the Forum Augusti, etc.

1. **Once**, once for all ; cp. *M. A.* i. 1. 320, "Look what will serve is fit ; 'tis *once*, thou lovest."

3. **may**, have the power.

4, 5. **We have ... do**, "*power* first signifies *natural power*, or *force*, and then *moral power*, or *right*" (Johnson).

6, 7. **we are to ... them**, we shall be bound to make ourselves the mouthpieces of those wounds by applauding the heroism by which they were gained. Wright contrasts Antony's speech, *J. C.* iii. 2. 229, "I tell you that which you yourselves do know : Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds, poor poor dumb mouths, And bid them speak for me."

10, 1. **the which**, see note on i. 1. 253.

13, 14. **And to make ... serve**, and it will not take much to make him call us monsters : **once we stood**, once *when* we stood.

15. **stuck not**, did not hesitate; cp. *Hamlet*. iv. 5. 93, "Will nothing *stick* our person to arraign."

16. **of**, by.

19, 20. **if all ... south**, "though our having but one interest was most apparent, yet our wishes and projects would be infinitely discordant" (Warburton).

20, 1. **and their consent ... compass**, and the only agreement they would show would be to disagree as widely as the points of the compass are asunder.

24. **will not ... out**, will not fly out; cp. *A. Y. L.* iv. 1. 162, "make the door upon a woman's *wit*, and it *will out* at the case-ment."

25. **'tis strongly .. block-head**, there is no escape for an idea out of a head so dense.

28. **fog**, see note on i. 4. 30.

29. **rotten**, proleptically used for causing things to rot.

29, 30. **for conscience sake**, being ashamed to leave you utterly bare of sense; for the possessive case ending in *-ce* written without the apostrophe with *-s*, see Abb. § 471: **to help ... wife**, *i.e.* for which very little wit is required.

31. 2. **tricks**, mischievous jests: **you may, you may**, but never mind, you are at liberty to cut what jokes you like at my expense; cp. *T. C.* iii. 1. 116-8, "*Helen*. By my troth, sweet lord, thou hast a fine forehead. *Pan*. Ay, *you may, you may*."

33. **to give your voices**, *sc.* in favour of Marcius.

33, 4. **But that ... it**, but it does not matter whether you are or are not, for a bare majority is enough to decide the question.

34, 5. **if he would ... people**, if he would only show some sort of attention to the people, treat them with any consideration.

39, 40. **by ones ... threes**, in small parties at a time.

40. **by particulars**, of us separately.

40, 1. **wherein ... honour**, for in that way each one has individually the honour of giving, etc.

43. **go by him**, pass in front of him.

44. **Content, content**, very good.

45. **you are not right**, you are in the wrong in wishing to dispense with the ordinary practice.

47, 8. **I cannot ... pace**, I cannot bring my tongue to use such mincing gait.

50. **Some certain**, little more than *some* or *certain*; cp. *II. V.* i. 1. 87, "his true title to *some certain* dukedoms."

53. **To think upon you**, to give you their favourable consideration.

54, 5. **I would ... 'em**, I wish they would forget me as they do those virtuous principles which are only thrown away upon them when preached to them by our divines ; **'em**, not a contraction of *them*, but representing the old *heom*, *hem*, dative and accusative plural of *he*.

57. **In wholesome manner**, with proper respect.

68. **we hope ... you**, we hope for something in return.

69. **your price**, the price you put upon your bestowal of the consulship.

72. **shall be ... private**, shall be shown to you when we are alone.

75. **A match**, it's a bargain.

76. **your alms**, *i.e.* since he was acting as a beggar.

78. **An 'twere ... again**, if one had to be asked for one's vote again ... (I should refuse mine).

79. **stand with**, be in accord with ; cp. *A. Y. L.* ii. 4. 91, "if it *stand with* honesty."

85, 6. **You have ... friends**, if on the one hand you can claim the credit of having been a scourge to her enemies, you have on the other, the discredit of being a rod, etc.

89. **common in my love**, ready to give my love to any who sought it.

89, 90. **my sworn brother**, "an expression originally derived from the *fratres jurati*, who in the days of chivalry mutually bound themselves by oath to share each other's fortune (Dyce, *Gloss.*) ; cp. *H. V.* ii. 1. 13, "and we'll be all three *sworn brothers* to France" ; *M. A.* i. 1. 73, "He hath every month a new *sworn brother*" ; i. *H. IV.* ii. 4. 7 : **estimation**, esteem.

91. **a condition ... gentle**, to do so is to show a disposition which they consider amiable ; for **condition**, cp. *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 276, "Yet such is now the duke's *condition* That he misconstrues all that you have done."

91-4. **and since ... counterfeitly**, and since they in their wisdom think more of the outward signs of courtesy than of real love, I will study to ingratiate myself with them by courtly bows, and will take off my cap to them with the best affectation of deference ; **be off to them**, cp. *Oth.* i. 1. 10, "three great ones of the city, In personal suit to make me his lieutenant, *Off-capp'd* to him."

94, 5. **the bewitchment ... man**, the art by which popular men fascinate the mob : **bountiful**, bountifully : **the desirers**, those who like that kind of thing.

96. **beseech you**, as with 'pray thee,' *I* is frequently omitted before **beseech**.

101. **I will not ... them**, I will not confirm your knowledge of the wounds I have received by giving you ocular proof of them; the **seal** being necessary to give validity to a document.

102. **make much of**, prize highly.

105. **Most sweet voices !** said of course in bitter irony.

107. **the hire ... deserve**, the wages we have already well earned.

108. **woolless**, I have followed Dyce in adopting this correction by Collier's MS. Corrector for *woolvish* of the folio. Those who retain that reading explain it by reference to the fable of the wolf in sheep's clothing.

109. **Hob and Dick**, *i.e.* every common fellow that has a vote; as we say colloquially 'Every Tom, Dick, and Harry'; **Hob**, short for Robert, **Dick**, for Richard: **that do appear**, that make their appearance here.

110. **needless vouches**, testimony to my merit of which I stand in no need: **Custom ... to 't**, you say that custom bids me do it.

111. **What custom ... do 't**, if we should always do that which custom would have us do; for the supplementary pronoun **it**, see Abb. § 249.

112. **The dust ... unswept**, we should be leaving the dust to gather on the records of old time so that its character would be forgotten; **time** is spoken of as if it were a volume so covered with dust that no one would care to take it down from its shelf: **antique**, accented on the first syllable.

113. **And mountainous ... o'erpeer**, and error would reach such a mountainous height that truth would not be able to see its way on account of the obstacle.

114. **Rather ... so**, rather than that I should play the fool in this way.

116, 7. **I am ... do**, suddenly changing his tone, Marcius says, 'I have submitted to so much that I may as well go through with the matter'; cp. *Macb.* iii. 4. 138, "I am in blood Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more, Returning were as tedious as go o'er."

118. **moe**, originally **moe**, or *mo*, referred to number; *more*, to size.

120. **Watch'd**, kept awake at nights in war.

121. **two dozen odd**, two dozen or thereabouts, perhaps a few more.

122. **and heard of**, or at all events heard of; here, as in **two dozen odd**, **some less**, **some more**, Marcius is indulging in the



sarcastic self-depreciation which he so enjoys in his intercourse with the plebeians, as though he would say, 'If I must follow the custom of soliciting your votes, I must ; but I am not going to take the trouble of parading my services for the benefit of fellows like you.

124. **Indeed ... consul**, I am quite in earnest, though you may doubt it, in wishing to be chosen consul.

125. **cannot go without**, has every right to.

130. **Worthy voices**, cp. l. 105, above.

131. **stood your limitation**, stood in the forum for the prescribed time to solicit their votes ; gone through the prescribed ordeal of canvassing the people.

132. **Endue**, invest ; an older spelling of *endow* ; **remains**, there remains.

133. **official marks**, consular insignia.

134. **Anon**, at once ; *on an*, in one (*sc.* instant) : **Is this done ?** is this matter completed ?

135. **The custom ... discharged**, yes, answers Sicinius, so far as asking their votes in the customary manner.

136. **admit**, accept as consul.

137. **upon your approbation**, for the confirming of their choice.

140. **knowing myself again**, *sc.* which I hardly do in this strange dress.

141. **Repair**, betake myself ; in this sense from Lat. *repatriare*, to return to one's country.

144. **He has it now**, he has got his desire ; cp. *Macb.* iii. i. 1, 2, "Thou hast it now : king, Cawdor, Glamis, all As the weird women promised."

145. **'Tis warm at's heart**, it makes his heart glow with satisfaction.

146. **With a proud ... weeds**, though he brought himself to put on the humble dress of a candidate, his heart beats as proudly as ever beneath it ; **weeds**, frequent in Shakespeare for *garment*, now used only in the expression 'widow's weeds,' i.e. widow's mourning apparel ; from A.S. *wæd*, and *wæde*, a garment.

150. **deserve your loves**, prove himself worthy of the love shown by you in giving him your votes.

151. **to my ... notice**, as far as so poor an observer as myself could judge.

153. **flouted**, jeered at ; from "O. Du. *fluyten*, to play the flute, also to jeer, impose upon" ... (*Skeat, Ety. Dict.*) ; used by Shakespeare both transitively and intransitively.

154. **his kind**, only his ordinary manner.

155. **Not one**, *i.e.* there is not one.

157. **His marks of merit**, the wounds which testify to his deserts.

161. **aged custom**, Warburton points out that consular government was less than twenty years old.

162. **But**, except ; **so permit me**, allow of my being consul.

164. **Here was**, he was ready with.

166. **I have ... you**, I have no further need of you.

167-9. **Why either ... voices** ? why were you so stupid as not to recognize the scornful manner of his request, or so childishly generous as to give your votes, if you recognized it ? For the omission of *so* before **ignorant**, see Abb. § 281.

170. **As you were lesson'd**, as we instructed you ; cp. *T. A. v. 2. 110*, "Well hast thou *lesson'd* us ; this shall we do" : **when**, that when : **no power**, *sc.* as he now has by your gift.

174. **I' the ... weal**, in the commonwealth of which you are members : **and now arriving**, and now that he has arrived at ; the preposition of motion to or from is frequently omitted in Shakespeare ; *e.g. R. II. iii. 1. 3*, "Since presently your souls must *part your bodies*" ; *J. C. i. 2. 110*, "Ere we could *arrive the point* proposed."

175. **A place ... state**, a position of power and control in the state ; **potency and sway**, almost a hendiadys.

177. **Fast foe**, as before, a determined enemy : **plebeii, plebeians** ; here only.

180, 1. **so his ... voices**, that he was similarly bound to show consideration for you in return for the votes given by you.

182. **Translate**, transform.

183. **Standing ... lord**, showing himself a friend to you now that he was in a position to rule over you.

184. **had touch'd**, would have acted as a touchstone to test, etc.

185. **his inclination**, how he was disposed towards you : **pluck'd**, compelled him to give.

187. **As cause ... up**, whenever circumstances made it necessary to do so.

189, 90. **Which easily ... aught**, which is very averse from being bound by any stipulations ; **article**, see note on i. 9. 77.

191, 2. **You should ... unelected**, you should have made his anger a pretext for refusing to elect him.

193. **in free contempt**, with undisguised contempt.

194. **When he ... loves**, when your good-will was necessary to his purpose.

197, 8. or had ... judgement? or why did you give him your votes in opposition to the dictates of prudence?

199. Ere now, on former occasions: and now again, and could you now on the other hand; for again, see Abb. § 27.

200. Of him, cp. *T. N.* iii. 4. 2, "How shall I feast him? what bestow of him?"

201. Your sued-for tongues, your voices for which other candidates are so ready to sue.

202. confirm'd, as was necessary to complete the election.

203. And will deny him, and we *will* refuse him that confirmation.

204. of that sound, speaking to that tune.

205. to piece 'em, to supplement them; cp. *Lear*, i. 1. 202, "If aught within that little seeming substance, Or all of it, with our displeasure *pieced*."

208-10. make them ... so, allow them no greater freedom of making themselves heard than dogs that are as often beaten for barking (unnecessarily) as kept to bark (against thieves).

211. on a safer judgement, after more careful consideration.

212. Your ignorant election, the choice you have so ignorantly made; enforce, dwell forcibly upon; lay stress on; cp. *A. C.* ii. 2. 99, "If it might please you to *enforce* no further The griefs between you."

215. but your loves, but say that your great good-will towards him.

216, 7. took ... portance, prevented you from properly appreciating his behaviour towards you; portance, carriage, bearing; cp. *Oth.* i. 3. 139, "of my redemption thence And *portance* in my travels' history."

218. ungravely, with utter want of dignity. To mend the metre, Lettsom proposes "Which, *gibing most ungravely*, he did fashion"; Dyce considers **most** an interpolation.

219. After, in accordance with.

219-22. Lay ... him, throw blame upon us, saying that we strove hard, allowing nothing to hinder our purpose, to compel you to choose him; but that you must, with no other object than that you should be driven to, etc.; but is redundant, and Wright points out that its insertion is due to the preceding parenthetical clause.

223. after, in consequence of.

224. true affections, real inclinations.

225. must do, were compelled to do; must, past tense.

226. should, ought.

227. **To voice him consul**, to elect him consul by your votes.

228. **read lectures**, cp. "*lesson'd*," l. 170.

229. **How youngly**, at what an early age. Abbott (§ 23) points out that while in Elizabethan English adjectives were freely used as adverbs, on the other hand *-ly* was occasionally added to words from which we have rejected it.

230. **stock**, race.

231. **house**. family.

232. **Ancus Marcius**, fourth of the seven kings of Rome, Numa Pompilius being the second, and Tullus Hostilius the third.

236, 7. **And ... censor**, the text is that given by the Cambridge Editors, except that I have followed Dyce in reading "*who was nobly nam'd so*" instead of "*nobly named so*"; the folios give 'hither, And Nobly nam'd, so twice being Censor.' The passage in Plutarch which Shakespeare had in his mind is one in which he speaks of both the *ancestors* and the *descendants* of Coriolanus; and, as Pope points out, Shakespeare, not noticing this, includes among the ancestors Publius and Quintus, who lived more than three hundred, and Censorinus who lived two hundred, years after Coriolanus. The office of Censor was regarded as the highest dignity in the state, except the dictatorship, and its duties included the registration of the citizens and their property, the care of public morals, and the administration of the finances of the state. Caius Marcius Rutilus was appointed Censor in B.C. 294 and again in B.C. 265, in which latter year he brought forward a law enacting that no one should be chosen Censor a second time, and received in consequence the surname of Censorinus.

239. **beside**, moreover, in addition to the claim of 'long descent.'

239, 40. **wrought ... place**, strove by noble deeds to make himself a claim to a high position in the state.

242. **Scaling**, weighing; putting into the scale, balance.

243. **fix'd**, determined, persistent.

244. **sudden**, hasty, rash; cp. *H. V.* iv. 7. 186, "Some *sudden* mischief may arise of it," *i.e.* mischief caused by rashness.

245. **Harp on that still**, keep ever to that point, continue to harp on that string; cp. *Hamlet*. ii. 2. 189, "Still *harping* on my daughter," *i.e.* still dwelling on the subject of my daughter: **putting on**, instigation; cp. *Oth.* ii. 1. 313, "If this poor trash of Venice, ... stand *the putting on*."

246. **presently**, at once: **drawn your number**, got together a sufficient number of your fellows.

247. **so**, see Abb. § 63.



248. **Repent in**, repent in the matter of; cp. *T. C.* ii. 3. 149, "*In second voice we 'll not be satisfied.*"

249, 50. **This mutiny ... greater**, it is better that we should at once run the risk of provoking this mutiny now than await a greater risk, which we may be sure we shall have to face.

252, 3. **observe ... anger**, watch and profit by the opportunity which his anger will give; **answer**, cp. *A. W.* i. 1. 168, "*answer the time of request,*" i.e. take advantage of the time when it (the commodity) is in request.

255, 6. **And this ... onward**, and this outbreak to which we have goaded them shall seem their own doing, which it partly is.

### ACT III. SCENE I.

1. **made new head**, got together a fresh force; for **head**, see note on ii. 2. 85.

3. **composition**, coming to terms; cp. *Macb.* i. 2. 59, "*Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition.*"

5. **when time ... them**, when opportunity shall arise: **road**, in-road, attack; cp. *H. V.* i. 2. 138, "*Against the Scot, who will make road upon us.*"

6. **worn**, exhausted by warfare.

7. **in our ages**, in our lifetime.

9. **On safe-guard**, under a safe conduct; on an assurance that no harm should happen to him.

10. **for**, because.

15, 6. **he would ... restitution**, he would pawn everything that belonged to him, all his wealth, beyond all hope of ever redeeming it (as things pawned are redeemed); for **fortunes**, in the plural, cp. *M. A.* ii. 1. 314, "*Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes.*"

19. **cause**, excuse.

20. **To oppose ... fully**, to show him by action that my hatred is as great as his towards me.

23. **prank them**, dress themselves out; cp. *T. N.* ii. 4. 89, "*But 'tis that miracle and queen of gems That nature pranks her in attracts my soul*"; *M. M.* ii. 2. 118, "*but man, proud man, Drest in a little brief authority.*"

24. **Against ... sufferance**, beyond all that can be endured by any one with the least feeling of nobility.

29. **pass'd**, passed the ordeal of candidature.

30. **Have I ... voices?** were the votes given to me those of children incapable of knowing their own minds?

33. **Or all ... broil**, or all will be tumult and confusion.

34. **these**, such contemptible creatures as these: **now**, at one moment.

35. **What ... offices?** what is the use of your being appointed as their leaders and protectors, if you have no control over them?

36. **why rule ... teeth**, why do you not prevent their snarling in this way?

38. **It is ... plot**, this behaviour of theirs is no mere accident, but has been plotted and planned.

40. **Suffer 't and live**, if you endure it you will have to live.

43. **repined**, were reluctant that it should be done.

44. **Scandal'd**, reviled; cp. *J. C.* i. 2. 76, "hug them hard and after *scandal* them."

47. **sithence**, "M. E. *sithens*, with the addition of the adverbial -s to the old form *sithen*, from A. S. *siththan* ... after that ... a contraction from *sith than*, put for *sith dām*, after that" ... (*Skeat, Ety. Dict.*): **How! I inform them!** what! do you suppose that I should be likely to tell them? affecting virtuous indignation.

48. **like**, likely; just the sort of person to do it.

49. **to better yours**, to improve upon your way of doing things.

50. **Why then ... consul?** if so, I have no right to be consul.

51, 2. **Let me ... tribune**, if you find me deserving as ill of the state as you do, I will consent to the disgrace of being a colleague of yours: **that**, *sc.* intolerance.

53. **For which ... stir**, which causes the people to rise up in rebellion against your power.

54. **bound**, ready to go; from Icel. *búinn*, prepared, ready; here used figuratively.

54, 5. **you must ... spirit**, you must act with much greater moderation than you now display; **are out of**, have missed, gone astray from.

57. **yoke with him**, go in the same harness with him, be his colleague; cp. *H. V.* iv. 6. 9, "and by his bloody side, *Yoke-fellow* to his honour-owing wounds."

58. **abused**, misled, deceived; literally to turn away from the proper use: **set on**, instigated to their present behaviour: **paltering**, shuffling.

60. **dishonour'd rub**, dishonouring obstacle; **dishonour'd**, the passive participle employed for the termination in -ing; the figure is from the game of bowls, in which anything that diverts the course of the bowl is called a 'rub'; cp. *K. J.* iii. 4. 128, *H. V.* ii. 2. 188, "We doubt not now But every *rub* is smoothed in our way": **falsely**, treacherously.

61. **I' the plain ... merit**, in the path which his merits made so clear for him : **Tell me of corn !** do you talk to me of the distribution of corn !

62. **This ... speech**, I acknowledge without shame the speech you impute to me.

64. **My nobler friends**, as for my, etc.

66. **rank-scented many**, stinking mob.

67, 8. **Regard ... themselves**, "let them look in the mirror which I hold up to them, a mirror which does not flatter, and see themselves" (Johnson).

69. **soothing**, flattering by granting their demands.

70. **The cockle of**, the vile weed consisting in ; cp. *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 383, "sowed *cockle* reaps no corn." Ellacombe, *Plant Lore of Shakespeare*, p. 43, says, "In Shakespeare's time the word 'Cockle' was becoming restricted to the Corn-cockle (*Lychnis githago*), but both in his time, and certainly in that of the writers before him, it was used generally for any noxious weed that grew in cornfields, and was usually connected with the Darnel and Tares."

71, 2. **Which we ... number**, which we owe to our own foolish weakness in allowing them to mix with us in any way ; they are the tares ; **the honour'd number**, the wheat.

73, 4. **but that ... beggars**, except in so far as we have made it over to beggars.

78-80. **Coin words ... them**, exhaust themselves in coining abusive terms against those leprous scabs by which we scorn to be infected, but at the same time have invited infection ; **those measles**, those scabby rogues. Skeat says that **measles** here is not leprosy, but the disease now known by that name, and the origin of the word is the Du. *maselen*, originally meaning *spots*, while the M. E. *mesel*, a leper, is a word borrowed from O. F. *misel*, from Lat. *misellus*, wretched, a diminutive of *miser*, wretched. For **tetter**, cp. the substantive in *Hamlet* i. 5. 71, "And a most instant *tetter* bark'd about, Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust, All my smooth body."

82. **of their infirmity**, of like weakness with themselves.

85. **patient as the midnight sleep**, calm as sleep in the deep stillness of midnight.

86. **'twould be my mind**, it would be exactly what I think.

87, 8. **That shall ... further**, that shall, by being stripped of the consulship, be deprived of the power of doing further mischief.

89. **this ... minnows**, this fellow who so lords it among the small fry of the mob ; **Triton**, son of Poseidon and Amphitrite, dwelt with his father and mother in a golden palace at the



bottom of the sea ; and the Tritons when mentioned in poetry are represented as blowing horns at the command of Poseidon to still the waves ; *minnows*, one of the smallest river fish in England.

90. *absolute*, peremptory : 'Twas ... *canon*, his words were such as he was not authorized to use ; *from*, contrary to.

92. *grave but reckless*, who, though grave in appearance, are heedless of the mischief around you.

93. *given Hydra here*, put it in the power of this many-headed multitude ; *Hydra*, a monster with nine heads, of which the middle one was immortal, ravaged the country of Lernæ near Argos. Hercules struck off its heads with his club ; but in place of each head cut off, two new ones grew forth. With the help of his servant Iolaus, Hercules burnt off the eight mortal heads, and buried the ninth, or immortal one, under a huge rock.

94, 5. *being but ... monster*, he being no more the noisy mouth-piece of the monster ; the folios give *monster's*, a double genitive, which many editors retain. I have followed Capell.

95-7. *wants not ... his* ? has the audacity to say that he will dam up the current of your power, and turn his muddy stream into the channel that was yours ; in plain language, will arrogate to himself the powers that belong to you ; *in*, into.

97, 8. *If he ... ignorance*, if he possesses power, as he says he does, "the ignorance that gave it him vail or bow down before him" (Johnson) ; *vail*, cp. ii. *H. IV.* i. 1. 129, "Douglas ... 'gan *vail* his stomach," i.e. his wrath.

98, 9. *if none ... lenity*, if he has none, then it is high time for you to rouse yourselves out of that dreamy state of mildness you have of late displayed ; *learn'd*, wise, as men of your position should be.

101. *Let them ... you*, let them bench by your side.

101-4. *You are ... theirs*, it is you who are plebeians, if such fellows as these fill the place of senators ; and they *do* fill that place when "the voices of the senate and the people being blended together, the predominant taste of the compound smacks more of the populace than the senate" (Malone) ; for the noun *absolute* with a participle, see Abb. § 376.

105-7. *who puts ... Greece*, who dares to set his vulgar arrogance against the will of a tribunal more dignified than the sternest that Greece could ever show.

108. *It*, such a state of things.

109. *are up*, assert themselves.

110. *confusion*, ruin.

111, 2. *May enter ... other*, may during the struggle force its



way to the possession of power, and use the two contending parties as instruments of each other's destruction; for *take*, cp. iv. 4. 20.

113. *counsel*, advice.

114. *as 'twas used*, as was the custom.

116. *Though there ... power*, though there it was more excusable, for the people, etc.

117. 8. *fed ... state*, fed a disease which was certain to be fatal to the state.

120. *More worthier*, for the double comparative, see Abb. § 11.

121. *Was ... recompense*, was not a recompense made to them by us for anything they had done (but merely a free gift).

121, 2. *resting ... for 't*, we knowing well, as we had always known, that no service had been performed by them that deserved requital.

123. *Even when ... touch'd*, even when the state was in vital danger, was touched to the very centre.

124. *thread the gates*, pass through the gates on military service; cp. *R. II.* v. 5. 17, "It is as hard to come as for a camel To *thread the postern* of a small needle's eye."

127. *spoke ... them*, assuredly was no recommendation which should lead us to favour them.

127-30. *the accusation ... donation*, while the accusation, entirely without foundation, which they have so often brought against the senate, was not likely to induce us to be of our own accord so generous.

131, 2. *How shall ... courtesy?* how is this multitude, so blinded with passion, certain to interpret the kindness shown them by the senate? *bisson*, purblind, M.E. *bisen*, blind, purblind; in *Hamlet* ii. 2. 529, used for blinding, "threatening the flames With *bisson* rheum." The folios give *bosome-multiplied*, which some editors retain, and which Malone explains as "This multitudinous bosom; the bosom of that many-headed monster, the people." The reading in the text is a conjecture of Collier's MS. Corrector.

132. 3. *Let deeds ... words*, let us judge of what their words would be from what their actions have been.

133-5. '*We did ... demands*,' they would be sure to say, 'We claimed this donation; and as the patricians knew we far outnumbered them, they granted it out of mere fear, not from any noble motive'; *poll*, head, then a register of heads, a list of persons; cp. *A. W.* iv. 3. 190, "So that the muster-file, ... amounts not to fifteen thousand *poll*": Thus, by such weak generosity.

136. **The nature ... seats**, our august position as rulers of the state.

137. **which**, and such weakness.

140. **Enough, with over-measure**, yes, indeed, enough and a good deal more than enough.

141, 2. **What may ... withal** ! may everything in heaven and on earth that may be sworn by give confirmation to my concluding words !

142-8. **This double ... slightness**, this divided power and authority,—when one party disdains with good cause, while the other is insolent without reason ; where those who have on their side high birth, rank, wisdom, can enforce no decision unless it be in accord with popular ignorance,—must necessarily omit to deal with real wants, and for the time being yield to, be content to display, vacillation and weakness ; for **worship**, literally *worshship*, dignity, cp. *W. T.* i. 2. 314, “whom I from meaner form Have bench’d and rear’d to *worship* :” for **all**, = any, see *Abb.* § 12. In l. 146, it is due to the distance of the subject, **double worship**.

148, 9. **purpose ... purpose**, all determination being thus put out of the question, it follows as a consequence that nothing pertinent to the difficulty can be done.

150-2. **You that ... on’t**, “you whose zeal predominates over your terrors ; you who do not so much fear the danger of violent measures, as wish the good to which they are necessary, the preservation of the original constitution of our Government” (Johnson).

153, 4. **and wish ... physic**, and are ready to run a risk by administering a dangerous medicine to, etc. This seems to be the only meaning if **jump** is genuine, and that word is in a measure supported by a passage which Steevens quotes from Philemon Holland’s translation of Pliny’s *Natural History*, “If we looke for good successe in our cure by ministering ellebore, etc., for certainly it putteth the patient to a *jumpe* or hazard.” Dyce adopts Singer’s conjecture *imp*, literally to mend a broken feather, but though the word is used figuratively in *R. II.* ii. 1. 292, “*Imp* out our drooping country’s broken wing,” its connection with a desperate remedy would be a very strange one. Staunton has little doubt that *purge* is the right reading, as in *Macb.* v. 3. 52, “And *purge* it (*sc.* the land) to a sound and pristine health” ; and even more closely, *A. C.* i. 3. 53, 4, “And quietness, grown sick of rest, would *purge* By any *desperate* change.” This conjecture had occurred to myself, but it is difficult to believe that any transcriber or compositor could be wrong-headed enough to substitute so uncommon and difficult a word as **jump** for one so plain and common as *purge*.

156. 7. **let them ... poison**, Steevens compares *M. M.* i. 2. 133, "Like rats that ravin up their proper bane."

157-9. **your dishonour ... become 't**, the discredit you suffer, from the inroad made upon your power, paralyses your use of sound judgement, and robs the state of that integrity of action which ought to be an ornament to it.

160. **Not having**, it (*sc.* the state) not having.

161. **For**, in consequence of : **control**, limit, hamper : for the omission of the pronoun before **Has**, see Abb. § 400.

162. **answer**, pay the penalty.

164. **despite**, contemptuous hatred.

165. **What should ... tribunes** ? what possible good can the people derive from such old fools as these tribunes ? so, **bald** is used of foolish prating, i. *H. IV.* i. 3. 65, "This *bald* unjointed chat of his." For **should**, in this sense, see Abb. § 325.

166. 7. **On whom ... bench**, trusting to whom, they fail in their obedience to those higher in authority, of greater dignity.

168. **When what's ... law**, when necessity, not the fitness of things, prevailed.

170. **Let what ... meet**, let it be said by you that what is essentially fitting shall be made fitting for the occasion, be applied to the circumstances of the time. For the construction, cp. *Cymb.* iv. 2. 47, "This youth, howe'er distress'd, appears he hath had Good ancestors."

172. **Manifest**, plain, open.

173. **ædiles**, originally, as here, assistants of the tribunes, entrusted with mere ministerial duties ; in later times their office as of a much higher and more extended nature, such as the superintendence of public buildings, the care of the public lands, police functions, etc. : **apprehended**, seized.

175. **Attach**, arrest : **innovator**, "in Shakespeare 'innovation' is not only change, but change for the worse" (Wright).

177. **to thine answer**, to pay the penalty of your, etc. Cp. *H. V.* ii. 2. 143, "Arrest them to the *answer* of the law."

178. **surety him**, be sureties for his appearance at the proper season ; cp. *A. W.* v. 3. 298, "The jeweller that owes the ring is sent for, And he shall *surety* me" : **hands off**, remove your hands from my shoulder.

179. **rotten thing**, you feeble old wretch !

179, 80. **or I shall ... garments**, cp. *K. J.* ii. 1. 455-7, "Here's a stay That *shakes the rotten carcass* of old death *Out of his rags*."

181. **respect**, moderation of language and action.



190. **Confusion's near**, in a moment everything will be in a state of utter ruin.

190, 1. **You ... people!** you are nice fellows to be tribunes to the people!

194. **at point to lose**, on the very point of losing.

195. **would ... you**, would seize and take from you all power.

198. **lay all flat**, strew the city in ruins; cp. l. 204, below.

206. **which yet ... ranges**, which so far stands in orderly arrangement, as contrasted with **heaps and piles of ruin**. Cp. *A. C. i. l. 34*, "Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch Of the *ranged* empire fall!"

208. **stand to**, assert and maintain; cp. v. 3. 199, *H. VIII. ii. 4. 86*, "You speak not like yourself; who ever yet Have *stood to* charity."

210, 1. **in whose ... theirs**, from whose power we derive our authority to act as their representatives.

213. **the rock Tarpeian**, part of the Capitoline hill, so called from Tarpeia, daughter of Sp. Tarpeius, the governor of the Roman citadel, who was bribed by the Sabines to open its gates to them, and being crushed to death by them as they entered, was buried there.

215. **a word**, one word; see Abb. § 81.

220. **cold**, deliberate, passionless.

221. **prudent helps**, remedies dictated by prudence.

225. **Come try ... me**, come and make proof upon yourselves of the manner in which you have seen me behave towards my foes.

231. **All ... else**, otherwise everything will be ruined; cp. *R. III. iii. 6. 13*, "Bad is the world; and *all will come to naught*." **Get you gone**, be off with you as fast as you can.

233. **Shall it ... that**, do you wish matters to come to a mere question of strength?

235. **to cure this cause**, to mend matters by removing the cause of the present commotion.

236. **You cannot tent yourself**, you cannot cure yourself by probing; see note on i. 9. 31.

238. **I would ... are**, I wish they were barbarians upon whom I was free to wreak my vengeance,—and indeed they deserve no better name; the Greeks, and the Romans in later times, contemptuously called all foreigners *barbarians*, a word which had especial reference to difference of language.

239. **litter'd**, a term properly applied to animals only: so in the next line, **calv'd** not only imputes to the populace that they are mere animals, but animals of a most timid nature.



241. **your worthy rage.** your anger which you have good reason to feel (but which it is imprudent now to display).

242. **One ... another,** the present will have to be paid by the future ; another time will make up to us for the present.

244. **Take up,** meet, cope with ; cp. *H. V. ii. 4. 72*, "Good my sovereign, *Take up* the English short."

245. **odds beyond arithmetic,** the odds against us are beyond all calculation.

246. 7. **And manhood ... fabric,** and courage becomes mere foolhardiness when a man tries to oppose his strength to that of a building about to fall, a building which will surely crush him in its fall.

248. **the tag,** the rabble ; cp. *J. C. i. 2. 260*, "If the *tag*-rag people did not clap him and hiss him." A *tag* is properly a point of metal at the end of a lace, thence in the phrase *tag-rag* the meaning is appendage and shred. A further form is *tag-rag-and-bobtail*, where *bobtail* means the short, bunchy tail of a cur.

249. **interrupted waters,** waters whose course has been dammed up ; o'erbear, sweep away.

250. **to bear,** i.e. on their current ; vessels, etc.

251. **wit,** good sense : **be in request,** is likely to be appreciated.

252. **patch'd,** mended ; for this figurative sense, cp. ii. *H. IV. ii. 4. 252*, "when wilt thou leave fighting ... and begin to *patch* up thine old body for heaven?"

256. **for,** in order to gain.

257. **His ... mouth,** that which he feels he must give utterance to.

258. **vent,** let out, emit.

259. **does,** sc. he does ; for this ellipsis of the nominative, see Abb. § 399.

261. **Here's goodly work !** here's a pretty state of things !

262. **What, the vengeance,** why, curse it ! Here it is the obstinacy of Coriolanus that Menenius is especially angry at.

265. **Be every man himself,** arrogate all power to himself.

268-70. **And therefore ... nought,** and therefore law shall scorn to give him any further trial than the utmost rigour which can be exercised by that power of the people which he so despises and defies.

272. **their hands,** the physical instruments : **sure on't,** you may be sure of that.

275. **cry havoc,** to cry havoc was, in battle, to give the signal for general slaughter ; cp. *J. C. iii. 1. 273*, "*Cry 'Havoc,'* and let slip the dogs of war" ; *K. J. ii. 1. 357*, "*Cry 'Havoc !'*"

kings"; the origin of the word **havoc** is uncertain; some authorities driving it from A.S. *hafoc*, a hawk; others, from W. *havoc*, destruction.

276. **With modest warrant**, with justifiable moderation; cp. *K. J.* v. 2. 123, "I do know the scope And *warrant* limited unto my tongue."

277. **help**, helped; for the curtailed forms of past participles, see Abb. § 343.

283. **crave**, earnestly beg.

284. **turn you to**, put you to.

286. **peremptory**, firmly resolved; cp. *K. J.* ii. 1. 454, "not Death himself In mortal fury half so *peremptory*": **despatch**, put an end to; literally to dispose of speedily; from O.F. *des-pecher*, to hasten, send away speedily.

287. **eject**, get rid of by banishment.

288. **our danger**, a danger to us; **our** is Theobald's correction of *one*, the reading of the folios.

292. **deserved**, deserving; for other instances of the passive participle loosely employed for the termination in *-ing*, see Abb. § 374.

292, 3. **is enroll'd ... book**, is recorded in heaven; probably an allusion to the book of life in *Revelations*, xx. 12, 15; cp. *R. II.* i. 3. 202, "if ever I were traitor, My name be blotted from *the book of life!*" **dam**, usually as here, of the mother of animals, but in reality nothing more than the F. *dame*, lady.

297. **Mortal ... off**, which it would be fatal to cut off.

298. **worthy death**, see note on i. 1. 237.

299. **Killing**, when killing.

300. **hath**, *sc.* left in his body.

302. **to lose ... country**, if it were to be shed by, etc.

304. **A brand**, a mark of infamy by which we should be branded: **clean kam**, literally wholly crooked, *i.e.* almost identical with **Merely awry** in the next line; for **clean**, cp. *H. IV.* i. 2. 110, "though not *clean* past your youth"; Steevens says that **kam** is Welsh.

305. **Merely awry**, utterly away from the point; **awry**, *i.e.* *on wry*, on the twist.

306-8. **The service ... was**, if this speech, which Warburton would give to Sicinius, belongs to Menenius, it must be said ironically and mean, when a limb becomes mortified, we of course cease to think of the good service it has rendered us in former days; Staunton follows Steevens in putting a note of

interrogation after **was**; **gangrened**, from Gk. γάγγραινα, an eating sore, γαλνείν, to gnaw.

310. **his infection**, the disease with which he is infected; cp. *Sonn.* cxi. 10, "Whilst, like a willing patient, I will drink Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong *infection*."

312. **tiger-footed**, that leaps with the swift tread of the cruel tiger.

313. **The harm ... swiftmess**, the harm that results from unconsidered haste; cp the proverb "shutting the stable door when the steed is stolen"; to *scan* is literally to climb, to ascend point by point, then to count the measures in a poem, to scrutinize.

314. **to 's**, to his: **process**, deliberate procedure.

315. **parties**, factions: **as he is beloved**, he being so beloved.

316. **with**, by means of.

317. **What ... talk?** what is the use of talking.

318. **taste**, experience: **smote**, smitten; see Abb. § 343.

322. **bolted**, carefully considered; literally, sifted; cp. *H. V.* ii. 2. 137, "Such and so finely *bolted* didst thou seem," i.e. free from faults, weaknesses; so, *T. C.* iii. 2. 174, "Of such a *winnowed* purity in love": **meal and bran**, kernel and husk.

325. **answer**, be ready to meet.

326. **his utmost peril**, the most dangerous charges that can be brought against him.

328. 9. **and the end ... beginning**, and the end will be an utter stranger to the beginning; the consequence will be something upon which it is now impossible to calculate.

332. **on**, at: **attend**, await.

334. **In our first way**, as we at first intended to do.

336. **Or what ... follow**, or the worst consequences will await his refusal.

## SCENE II.

1. **pull ... ears**, bring destruction down upon me; the figure is that of pulling down a building upon some one, as Samson pulled down the temple of Gaza upon the Philistines: **present me**, put before me as a thing not to be escaped.

2. **the wheel**, an instrument of torture in which the body of the victim was bound on a wheel which was then rapidly whirled round; cp. *W. T.* iii. 2. 177, "What *wheels*? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling?" **at wild horses' heels**, a barbarous method of execution in which the limbs of a man were attached to two chariots which were then driven in different directions, thus



tearing the body asunder. This punishment was inflicted by Tullus Hostilius, king of Rome, upon Mettius Fuffetius, the Alban dictator, who, when in alliance with the Romans against the Fidenæ and Veientes, treacherously held aloof from the battle with his forces.

4, 5. **That the ... sight**, so that the abyss down which I was to be flung might be too deep for eyesight to pierce ; **precipitation**, precipitousness ; **beam**, ray of light reflected by the eye.

6. **thus**, as unyielding as before.

7. **muse**, wonder ; as more frequently in Shakespeare, though he also uses the word in the commoner modern sense.

8. **approve me further**, more cordially sympathize with my behaviour towards the people : **wont**, accustomed ; past participle *M. E. wonen*, to dwell, be accustomed to.

9. **woollen vassals**, coarse-clad-slaves ; Wright aptly compares *M. N. D.* iii. 1. 79, "hempen homespuns," said of the Athenian artizans ; **vassalls**, literally dependants ; according to Skeat of a Celtic origin, Bret. *gwaz*, a servant ; Latinized in Low Latin as *vassallus*.

9, 10. **things ... groats**, fellows whose trade did not go beyond a few pence ; *groat*, a fourpenny piece : **to show bare heads**, to stand uncovered.

11. **congregations**, public assemblies.

12. **one but**, for similar transpositions of **but**, see Abb. § 129 : **ordinance**, order, rank.

15, 6. **Rather say ... I am**, instead of rebuking me you should rather say that I do but show myself in my true colours.

17, 8. **I would ... out**, I should have wished that you had become accustomed to your power before you used it so roughly as to ruin it ; the figure is that of putting on a garment and quickly wearing it out by rough usage : **Let go**, never mind.

19, 20. **You might ... so**. you might have shown your real character sufficiently, if you had been less eager to assert yourself.

20, 1. **lesser ... dispositions**, your inclinations would have met with less opposition ; **thwartings** is Theobald's correction of *things*.

23. **Ere they ... you**, till they no longer had power to cross you.

25. **something**, somewhat.

26. **mend it**, mend matters ; **it**, used indefinitely.

26, 8. **There's no ... perish**, there is no cure for what has happened, unless you call this a cure that, by our acting differently our city should go to ruin ; *i.e.* the certain result of our yielding at all to the people will be that our city will go to rack and ruin ; and that's the only remedy left, if you please to call it by such name : **be counsell'd**, listen to sound advice.



29-31. **I have ... vantage**, my heart is not more easily impressed (by fear) than yours, but my brain teaches me when I give way to anger to turn it to better account; for **apt**, in this absolute sense, cp. *Tim.* i. 1. 132, "She is young and *apt*"; *H. V.* v. 2. 312, "Is she not *apt*?"

32-4. **Before ... state**, rather than that he should so lower himself as to make terms with the populace, if it were not that the desperate state of affairs urgently calls upon him to do so for the general welfare: **violent fit o' the time**, paroxysm of madness from which the time is suffering.

37. **Repent**, express your regret for.

39. **absolute**, peremptory, positive.

40, 1. **Though ... speak**, though, except when circumstances of the most critical nature forcibly urge conciliation, the firmer you are, the greater is your honour; for **speak**, = make itself heard in calling out for something, cp. *Lear*, i. 4. 267, "The shame itself doth *speak* For instant remedy."

42. **policy**, stratagem, craft; cp. *T. C.* iv. 1. 17, "By Jove, I'll play the hunter for thy life With all my force, pursuit and *policy*": **unsever'd**, inseparable; cp. *R. II.* ii. 1. 268, "And *unavoided* is the danger now," i.e. inevitable.

43. **grow together**, flourish hand in hand.

43-5. **tell me ... there**, tell me how in time of peace either can be so injured by combination with the other as to make it necessary to keep them apart; for **each**, as a plural, see Abb. § 12: **A good demand**, a very pertinent question.

46. **honour**, an honourable thing.

47. **The same ... not**, something different from what you really are.

47, 8. **which ... policy**, a line of action that in order best to secure your object you adopt as your policy: **less or worse**, less honourable or baser.

49. **it**, *sc.* policy.

51. **It ... request**, it is equally necessary: **force**, urge so strongly, enforce, as in ii. 3. 212.

52. **it lies you on**, it is incumbent on you; for this transposition of the preposition, see Abb. § 204.

53. **not ... instruction**, not according to any dictates of your own conscience.

54. **prompts you**, *sc.* to.

55. **roted**, learnt by rote; **rote**, from "O. F. *rote*, Mod. F. *route*, a road, way, beaten track ... Hence *by rote* = along a beaten track, or with constant repetition" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*).

56, 7. **though ... truth**, though those words are but fathered on you by expediency, and are such as your real feelings in no way acknowledge; for **allowance**, cp. *T. C.* i. 3. 377, "among ourselves give him *allowance* for the better man."

59. **take in**, capture, as in i. 2. 24.

60, 1. **would ... blood**, would otherwise oblige you to put everything to the hazard and to risk the shedding of much blood.

62. **where**, in cases in which.

63, 4. **My fortunes ... honour**, the fact of my fortunes and my friends being in danger made it a point of honour that I should do so; or perhaps, made it necessary that I should do so, provided I could do it honourably.

64, 5. **I am ... nobles**, in this matter you must look upon me as standing for your wife, etc.

66-9. **And you ... ruin**, and you obstinately prefer to show our rabble, this clownish populace, how terribly you can frown than to flatter them in such small degree as will be sufficient to win their love and ensure safety to that which without their love is likely to be utterly ruined; for **inheritance**, = possession simply, not possession as derived in an hereditary manner, cp. *Hamlet*. i. 1. 92; so the verb *inherit* frequently in Shakespeare.

70-2. **you may ... past**, by doing so you may not only cure what is dangerous in the present, but also make up for the reverse already sustained; for **Not**, followed by **but**, in the sense of *not only*, cp. below, iii. 3. 97: **prithee**, I pray you.

73. **this bonnet**, this cap of yours; pointing to it as she speaks.

74. **And thus ... it**, and having stretched out your hand, with your cap in it, in this way; here she indicates the manner by a gesture. Grant White explains **having stretch'd it** as having stretched his disposition: **here be with them**, at this point salute them with a courteous gesture, a sweeping bow. Staunton compares Brome's *Jovial Crew*, or *The Merry Beggars*, ii. 1, where Springlove, describing his having solicited alms as a cripple, says,—“For here I was with him” [*Halts*]. The expression seems to have been especially used of contemptuous gestures, as in *W. T.* i. 2. 217, “They’re here with me already, whispering, rounding ‘Sicilia is a so-forth’”; so Chapman, *May Day*, near the end of Act iv., where the hooting of a cuckold is the subject of conversation, Faunio says, “That dare I not do” (i.e. laugh openly when he saw him), “but as often as he turns his back to me, I shall be here V with him, that’s certain,” the V indicating the gesture of his open fingers.

75. **bussing**, kissing, i.e. lightly touching; the word had not in former days the idea of coarse familiarity which it now implies.

75-7. **for in such ... ears**, for in matters of this kind action is the truest eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant are better appealed to than their ears.

77-80. **waving ... them**, courteously bowing your head to them, and, by doing this repeatedly, correcting your stubborn heart, which by this time will have become as soft as a mulberry, so ripe that it will not bear handling,—say to them, etc. Johnson would read '*with often*,' thus, *i.e.* shaking your head and striking your breast; Grant White gives '*Which often*'; *i.e.* which do often; Capell conjectures '*And often*'; Staunton, '*While often*'; Nicholson '*Whiles-often*,' *i.e.* oftentimes. Delius takes **humble** as a verb; others again as = be humble. Further, the folios read '*or say*,' which spoils alike the rhythm and the sense. It is not an alternative that Volumnia is suggesting, but in the earlier part of her speech the *action* which is to prelude the words, and then *the words themselves*. **Which often**, etc., appears to be a confusion between 'that action, oftentimes repeated, correcting,' etc., and 'which action, oftentimes repeated, will correct,' etc. Steevens points out that mulberries when thoroughly ripe drop from the tree.

81. **broils**, in Shakespeare's day used in a wider sense than at present, for battles, combats, not merely petty brawls; cp. *Macb.* i. 2. 6, "Say to the king the knowledge of the *broil*," where a pitched battle is referred to.

83, 4. **Were fit ... loves**, would be as becoming in you when asking their good-will as it is justifiable in them to demand; for **as they**, where we should say 'as for them,' cp. *C. E.* i. 1. 33, "A heavier grief could not have been imposed *Than I* to speak my griefs unspeakable"; the conjunction being "regarded as introducing a new sentence, instead of connecting one clause with another" (Abb. § 216).

84-6. **but thou ... person**, but that for the future you will discipline yourself to be their faithful servant to the best of your faculties, mental and physical.

87. **their ... yours**, you would in a moment have won their hearts.

88, 9. **For they ... purpose**, for they are just as ready to pardon a wrong as to talk after their usual foolish manner.

90. **be ruled**, allow yourself to be guided in this matter.

91. **in, into**.

92. **bower**, properly a chamber, thence used generally of a shady recess formed by trees and shrubs.

93-5. **'tis fit ... absence**, it will be well either to take with you a strong party of your friends, or to seek safety in moderation of language, or by absenting yourself from the scene: **all's in anger**, the fury is universal.



96. **Only fair speech**, the only possible way out of the danger is to use gentle words ; armed resistance is impossible, while to absent yourself will only put off the evil day.

99. **unbarbed sconce**, unprotected head, bare head ; “a war-horse protected by head and chest-pieces of defensive armour was technically said to be *barbed*, *barded*, or *bard*, these being all different forms of the same word derived from the French *bardé*, which Cotgrave renders ‘barbed or trapped as a great horse’” ... (*Ed. Rev.*, Oct. 1872) : the same writer shows that **sconce** is used in Shakespeare in three different senses, first for head, as here ; second, for a rounded fort ; third, for what protects or covers the head, a cap or hood.

102. **this single plot**, this small portion of earth ; the body being made of earth.

103. **This ... Marcius**, this mere frame in which I am cast ; cp. *W. T.* ii. 3. 103, “The very *mould* and frame of hand, nail, finger.”

105, 6. **You have ... life**, you have forced me now to undertake a part which I shall never perform with any natural grace ; **such** “was by derivation the natural antecedent to *which* ; *such* meaning ‘so-like,’ ‘so-in-kind’ ; *which* meaning ‘what-like,’ ‘what-in-kind ?’” (*Abb.* § 278) ; for **discharge**, a technical term of the theatre, cp. *M. N. D.* i. 2. 95, “I will *discharge* it (*sc.* my part) in your straw-coloured beard” ; also iv. 2. 8, v. 1. 206, 368 ; **prompt you**, carrying on the technical phraseology.

109. **To have**, in order to gain.

111, 2. **and possess ... spirit**, and may I be animated by, etc. : **spirit**, the nominative case ; **my throat of war**, my voice which is only tuned to uttering words of command in battle.

113. **Which ... drum**, which has been used to sound in harmony with, etc. ; **quire**, a band of singers, is only another spelling of *choir*, from Lat. *chorus*, Gk. *χορός*, a dance in a ring, a band of dancers and singers ; **pipe**, cp. *T. N.* i. 4. 32, “thy small *pipe* Is as a maiden’s organ, shrill and sound.”

114. **Small as an eunuch**, as shrill as that of an eunuch : **virgin voice**, voice of a maiden.

115. **That babies lull asleep**, that soothes children off to sleep ; most modern editors give *lulls* for *lull*, the reading of the folios which I retain because of the harshness of so many consecutive sibilants. This confusion of proximity due to a plural intervening between the subject and the verb is very frequent in Shakespeare ; for instances, see *Abb.* § 412.

116. **Tent**, may the smiles encamp : **take up**, occupy.

117. **The glasses ... sight**, my eye-balls.

119. **Who**, this personification of an irrational antecedent occurs



constantly ; see Abb. § 264 : *stirrup*, properly *sty-rope*, a rope to climb by ; in old days only a single one was used.

120. *alms*, properly, as here, a singular noun, from M. E. *almesse*, a corruption of the Lat. *eleemosyna* from Gk. *ἐλεημοσύνη*, compassion.

121. *surcease*, cease ; the substantive *surcease* is from the F. *sursis*, the past participle of *surseoir*, to pause, intermit ; cp. *R. J.* iv. 1. 97, "for no pulse Shall keep his native progress, but *surcease*" ; and the substantive in *Macb.* i. 7. 4, "if the assassination Could ... catch With his *surcease* success."

123. *A most inherent baseness*, a baseness that will cling to it persistently : *At ... then*, then, be it as you please.

124 *it is ... dishonour*, it is a greater dishonour to me ; for other instances of *more* used for *greater*, see Abb. § 17.

125-7. *Come ... stoutness*, though utter ruin be the consequence, let the worst come that can come ; let me rather bend beneath your unyielding pride than stoop to any fear of the dangers which your stubbornness may bring down upon us. If, through your mother, I must bow to your pride, that is a thing which I can bear ; to fear the dangers it may bring upon us is, to one of my nature, an impossibility.

128. *as thou list*, as you may choose ; *list*, subjunctive.

130. *owe*, own ; the final *-n* being dropped ; cp. *ope* and *open* : *be content*, be calm.

132. *mountebank their loves*, cajole them out of their goodwill, as a charlatan cajoles foolish people out of their pence ; a *mountebank* is one who mounts on a bench to hawk his goods.

133. *Cog ... them*, cheat them out of their affection.

135. *Commend me*, give all loving messages from me.

138. *attend*, are waiting for : *arm yourself*, discipline yourself.

141. *Than ... yet*, than have as yet been brought against you.

142. The word is 'mildly,' the watchword I am to remember is 'mildly' ; *word*, cp. *J. C.* v. 5. 4, "slaying is *the word*."

143. *by invention*, with any crimes they may invent.

144. *in mine honour*, according to what my honour dictates.

### SCENE III.

1. *charge him home*, press him so strongly that he will not be able to escape : *affects*, aims at.

3. *Enforce ... people*, lay stress upon the hatred he bears to the people ; *envy*, malice ; as more usually in Shakespeare.

4, 5. **And that ... distributed**, and vigorously assert that the plunder taken from the Antiates was never distributed, as it should have been, among the soldiers.

6. **What**, expressing some surprise.

9. **procured**, made sure of by canvassing.

10. **Set ... poll**, registered man by man ; **poll**, see note on iii. 1. 134.

11. **by tribes**, the Roman plebs was divided by Servius Tullus into thirty tribes, four for the city, and twenty-six for the country around Rome.

12. **presently**, at once, without delay.

14. **I' the right ... commons**, 'as the rights and power of the commons dictate.

14, 5. **be it ... death**, whether the popular vote be for his death.

17. **prerogative**, right, privilege ; the Latin adjective from which the word comes was used of the tribe that was first called upon (by lot) to give its vote in the elections.

18. **And power ... cause**, and the might which the justice of our cause gives us ; **I shall**, see note on i. 1. 77.

19. **And when ... cry**, and when at such time they have once begun.

21. **present**, immediate.

23. **Make ... hint**, prepare them to receive with alacrity and to follow up with persistence the hint we shall give them.

24. **hap**, happen, chance.

25. **Put ... straight**, at once stir him up to anger.

26, 7. **to have ... contradiction**, to have his full allowance of contradiction ; to be allowed to contradict as he pleases ; Malone compares *R. J.* iv. 5. 4, "you take your *pennyworths* (*sc.* of sleep) now."

27, 8. **being once ... temperance**, when he has once been put into a passion no persuasions can bring him back to moderation.

29, 30. **which looks ... neck**, which is likely, with what we shall do, to bring him to his death. Brutus speaks as though the impatience which Marcius is sure to display was a party to the eagerness with which they anticipated his death.

32. **ostler**, groom ; originally the keeper of a hostelry, or inn, then the servant who takes care of the horses at an inn : **for the poorest piece**, for any trifle of money.

33. **Will bear ... volume**, will endure abuse (*i.e.* being called knaves) to any extent.

36. **Throng ... peace**, fill our temples, large as they are, with crowds of citizens peacefully celebrating some glorious event.

40. **Audience** ! give audience, listen.

43. **Must ... here** ? may I be assured that this will be the end of the business ? may I take it for granted that I shall not again be called upon for my defence ? **determine**, come to an end ; used in a legal sense : **demand**, ask ; never in Shakespeare with the present imperious sense.

45. **Allow their officers**, acknowledge the authority of us who have been chosen by the people as their representatives and guardians ; for **Allow**, cp. iii. 2. 57.

46. **censure**, sentence, and here = condemnation.

50, 1. **which show ... churchyard**, which bear testimony to his valour as tombstones in the churchyard bear testimony to the virtues of those who lie beneath them.

51, 2. **Scratches ... only**, here, as before, Marcius is irritated at the idea of his brave deeds being trumpeted forth.

54. **You find ... soldier**, you see him in the character of a soldier.

57. **Rather ... you**, rather than such as show ill-will towards you.

59. **with full voice**, with general assent.

61. **take it off**, see note on iii. 2. 17.

62. **I ought so**, i.e. to do so.

63. **contrived**, plotted, planned.

64. **all season'd office**, such official control as has been tempered by time and use, so that it has lost all character of arbitrary power.

67. **your promise**, remember the promise you made us.

68. **fold-in**, envelope, wrap as with a garment ; cp. below, v. 6. 125.

69. **Call ... traitor** ! to think that he should dare to call me traitor to the people ! **injuriously**, insulting ; cp. *Cymb.* iv. 2. 86, "Thou *injuriously* thief !"

70. **sat**, if there sat.

71. **clutch'd**, were grasped ; to *clutch* has the idea of seizing hastily, as a bird does with his talon.

72. **both numbers**, the twenty thousand and the millions.

73. **free**, unreserved, outspoken.

75. **the rock**, sc. Tarpeian.

76. **We need ... charge**, we have no need to bring against him the fresh charges we had prepared ; see above, iii. 2. 139-41.

78. **Beating**, namely, beating.

79. **strokes**, physical force.

80. **even this**, this alone without any further acts.

81. **So criminal**, so heinous; cp. *Hamlet* iv. 7. 7, "against these feats *So crimeful* and so *capital* in nature"; **capital** here is rendered tautological by the next line.

82. **extremest**, of the most cruel kind it is possible to inflict.

83. **What ... service**, what business has a fellow like you to be chattering of service?

84. **I talk ... it**, I am talking of that which I am competent to talk of.

85. **You?** with intense scorn; **you**, a fellow who has never dealt a blow in war, do *you* think you have a right to talk on such a subject as my services?

87. **I'll ... further**, I'll listen to no more remonstrances.

88. **the steep ... death**, death by being flung down the steep Tarpeian rock.

89. **Vagabond exile**, banishment which involves wandering about on the face of the earth: **pent to linger**, a sentence which means my being immured in prison to drag out a weary existence; i.e. the sentence of my being pent, or whereby I should be pent.

92, 3. **Nor check ... morrow**, 'nor put restraint upon my freedom of speech for anything they can grant, even if it was to be had for merely saying 'Good morning': **For that**, because.

95. **Envied ... people**, shown hatred by railing against the people; cp. above, l. 57.

96. **as now at last**, as finally he has just now.

97. **not**, not merely; cp. above, iii. 2. 71.

100. **And in ... tribunes**, and by the power which we as tribunes wield.

101. **banish ... city**, "verbs of ablation, such as 'bar,' 'banish,' 'forbid,' often omit the preposition before the place or inanimate object" (Abb. § 198); cp. *M. V.* ii. 1. 16, "the lottery of my destiny *Bars* me the right of voluntary choosing."

102. **In peril of precipitation**, at the risk, if he should dare to show his face in Rome, of being flung down.

103. **never more**, sc. thus condemning him never more: **Rome gates**, for this license of converting one part of speech into another, see Abb. § 22.

109. **no more hearing**, we will have nothing to do with any further hearing, the time is past for that.

110. **for**, Theobald's correction of *from*.

114. **My ... estimate**, "the rate at which I value my dear wife" (Johnson).

114, 5. **her womb's ... loins**, i.e. my children; for **increase**, = fer-



tility, cp. *Temp.* iv. 1. 110, "Earth's *increase*, foison plenty": would, desired.

116. **your drift**, what the purport of your words would be; the point at which your words would drive.

117. **but**, except that.

120. **You common ... curs**, you pack of worthless hounds; for *cry*, cp. *Oth.* ii. 3. 370, "not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the *cry*," though there and in *M. N. D.* iv. 1. 129, the word may be used in its literal sense from which by metonymy we get the meaning of 'pack.'

121. **As reek ... fens**, as I hate the foul vapours from putrid fens; cp. *M. W.* iii. 3. 86, "the *reek* of a lime-kiln"; the verb is much commoner; **rotten fens**, cp. *Temp.* i. 2. 322, "As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd With raven's feather from *unwholesome fen*."

122. **As**, no more dearly; *i.e.* not only do not prize them at all, but violently loathe them.

123. **my air**, the air I breathe: **I banish you**, it is not you who banish me, but I who, by quitting Rome, banish you; cp. *R. II.* i. 3. 279, 80, "Think not the king did *banish* thee, But thou the king."

124. **And here remain**, and do you here remain; as though he had condemned them to remain. For the change of construction, cp. *M. A.* v. 1. 303, "I do embrace your offer; *and* dispose (*i.e.* and do you dispose) For henceforth of poor Claudio"; and v. 3. 28, "Thanks to you all, *and* leave us."

126, 7. **Your enemies ... despair!** may the mere sight of your enemies' plumes as they wave in the breeze cause you to shiver with despair! We should now say either 'the nodding of their,' or 'nodding their'; see Abb. § 178.

127, 8. **Have ... defenders**, may you retain and exercise the privilege of banishing those to whom alone you can trust for your protection.

129. **which finds ... feels**, which can be stung into perception only by bitter suffering.

130. **Making ... yourselves**, in its density not making an exception even of yourselves; inflicting its natural consequences upon yourselves as well as others.

131. **Still**, ever.

132. **Abated**, humbled; crushed into a state of abject humility.

133. **That won ... blows**, that had not even to take the trouble of making war upon you, you being ready to yield at a word.

134. **For you**, on your account, you being a part of it.

138. **at gates**, the definite article is frequently omitted after prepositions in adverbial phrases.

139. **with all despite**, with every mark of hatred.

140. **vexation**, annoyance ; like which word **vexation** was used in a stronger sense than at present when it means petty worry.

141. **Attend**, accompany to guard.

#### ACT IV. SCENE I.

2. **butts me away**, pushes me out ; as a goat butts at its enemies.

3. **your ancient courage**, the courage you were wont to show : used, accustomed ; we no longer employ the word in this sense in any but the past tense.

4. **extremity**, the fiercest misfortunes.

7. **Show'd ... floating**, showed themselves well capable of keeping afloat ; cp. *T. C.* i. 3. 33-6, "In the reproof of chance Lies the true proof of men: the sea being smooth, How many shallow bauble boats dare sail Upon her patient breast."

7-9. **fortune's blows ... cunning**, when the blows of misfortune strike us with most deadly force, it is then that to bear them with calmness demands the exercise of the noblest wisdom ; a confusion of construction due to change of thought ; for **cunning**, = skill, knowledge, cp. *M. M.* iv. 2. 165, "if I read it not truly, my ancient skill beguiles me : but, in the boldness of my *cunning*, I will lay myself in hazard." The word originally meant nothing more than *knowing*, from A.S. *cunnan*, to know.

11. **conn'd**, properly, tried to know ; used especially of getting a thing by heart.

13. **the red pestilence**, "three different kinds of the plague-sore are mentioned by the physicians of the time ; the red, the yellow, and the black" (Schmidt).

14. **occupations**, all trade ; used contemptuously, as in iv. 6. 97 : **What, what, what!** exclamations of impatience ; *when* is used similarly, as in *R. II.* i. 1. 162, "*when*, Harry, *when*? Obedience bids I should not bid again."

15. **I shall ... lack'd**, they will begin to love me as soon as they feel the want of me ; cp. *A. C.* i. 4. 43, 4, "And the ebb'd man, ne'er loved till ne'er worth love, *Comes dear by being lack'd.*"

16. **Resume ... say**, resume that spirit *you were wont to show* when, etc.

18. **labours**, the twelve labours imposed by Eurystheus upon Hercules when bidden by the Pythian oracle to serve that mon-

arch in atonement for having killed his own sons in a fit of madness.

22, 3. **Thy tears ... eyes**, *i.e.* it is harder for you to have to weep than for a younger man : **sometime**, former.

24, 5. **thou hast ... spectacles**, you are accustomed to sights which render the heart callous, and so are fitted to encourage those who are inclined to give way.

26. **fond**, foolish ; as very frequently in Shakespeare.

27. **wot**, know ; properly the past tense of *wit*, to know.

28. **My hazards ... solace**, the dangers I have encountered have always been a source of pride to you.

30, 1. **that his ... seen**, who, from the fact of his hiding himself away in his marshy retreat, is more feared and talked of than if he showed himself more frequently. Marcius means that by going into banishment, he, far from being forgotten and despised, will be more talked of and more feared than if he were to be seen daily in the city.

32, 3. **Will or exceed ... practice**, will show himself something more than an ordinary man, unless he falls a prey to crafty wiles and plots ; **cautelous**, cp. *J. C.* ii. l. 129, "Swear priests and cowards and men *cautelous*" ; the Lat. *cautela*, diminutive of *cautio* (originally a law term meaning a caution, security), indicates the pettiness of the caution which degenerates into suspicion, and so into shiftiness : **practice**, plot, stratagem, underhand contrivance.

33. **My first son**, Warburton explains **first** as "noblest and most eminent of men" ; as Volumnia had no other sons, **first**, for *first-born*, is strange.

36, 7. **More than ... thee**, more definite than that of recklessly exposing yourself to every mischance that may suddenly show itself in your path ; the figure is that of unexpectedly coming upon some wild animal in one's path ; **exposure**, is not elsewhere met with, and many editors follow Rowe in reading *exposure* ; for **chance**, in a bad sense, cp. *T. A.* i. l. 152, "Secure from worldly *chances* and mishaps !"

40, 1. **if the time ... repeal**, if circumstances should suddenly give us an opportunity for recalling you ; for **repeal**, cp. *T. G.* iii. l. 234, "When she for thy *repeal* was suppliant" : **we shall not send**, we shall not be sending, shall not have to send.

43, 4. **And lose ... needer**, and so let slip the favourable opportunity which always quickly vanishes when he who should make use of it is away : so we speak of striking while the iron is hot.

47. **unbruised**, still vigorous and none the worse for my experiences.

49. **friends of noble touch**, friends whose nobleness has been



tested and proved ; an allusion to the touchstone used in testing the precious metals : **when I am forth**, when I have quitted Rome.

52. **still**, constantly.

53. **But what ... formerly**, but what is in keeping with my life hitherto ; for instances of other adverbs after **is**, see Abb. § 78.

53, 4. **That's ... hear**, and that manner of your life is as noble as words can express.

55. **but ... years**, so short a period as seven years : cp. *Macb.* v. 5. 37, "Within this three mile" ; *M. M.* i. 3. 21, "Which for this nineteen years we have let slip."

57. **I'd ... foot**, I would accompany you wherever you might go.

## SCENE II.

1. **Bid ... home**, bid them all *go* home ; order them home, as we still say : **we'll no further**, we will proceed no further in the matter, but be content with things as they are ; cp. *Macb.* i. 7. 31, "We will proceed *no further* in this business."

2. **whom we ... sided**, a confusion of constructions between 'who we see have sided,' and 'whom we see sided' ; cp. *Temp.* iii. 3. 92, "Young Ferdinand *whom* they suppose is drowned" ; *K. J.* iv. 2. 165, "Of Arthur, *whom* they say is kill'd to-night."

3. **Now we**, now that we.

4. **seem humbler**, show ourselves more moderate.

5. **a-doing**, on, or in, doing.

10. **ta'en note**, noticed : **keep ... way**, do not try to avoid them ; meet them boldly.

11. **the hoarded ... gods**, such plagues as the gods have hoarded up to inflict on those that deserve their special vengeance. Wright compares *R. III.* i. 3. 217-21.

12. **Requite**, punish ; more frequently used of rewarding.

13. **If that ... hear**, if tears did not hinder my speech, you should, etc. For the conjunctive affix, see Abb. § 287.

14. **shall**, emphatic : **Will ... gone ?** do you think to escape ?

16. **mankind**, Sicinius uses the word in the sense of masculine, violent, ferocious, a sense in which it was applied to wild beasts also ; Volumnia takes it in the more natural sense of belonging to the human race. Cp. *W. T.* ii. 3. 67, "A *mankind* witch ! Hence with her, out o' door."

17. **is that a shame ?** is that anything to be ashamed of ? **Note ... fool**, just listen to this idiot.



18. **foxship**. Johnson explains, "Hadst thou, fool as thou art, mean cunning enough to banish Coriolanus?" Schmidt takes **foxship** for *ingratitude*, comparing *Lear*, iii. 6. 24, "Now, you she-foxes!", said to Lear's ungrateful daughters, and iii. 7. 28, "Ingrateful fox! 'tis he"; but in both cases the ordinary attribute of the fox, cunning, is from the speaker's point of view quite applicable.

23. **Nay ... too**, but no, I have changed my mind, and you *shall* stay to hear what I have to say.

24. **Were in ... him**, were in some desolate place, where no help could come to them, with the whole crew to which you belong; cp. *Macb.* iii. 4. 104, "be alive again, And dare me to *the desert* with thy sword"; *Cymb.* i. 1. 167, "I would they were *in Afric* both together; Myself by with a needle, that I might prick The goer-back."

28. **Good man, ... Rome!** to think of the services which he, noble man that he is, has rendered to his country!

31, 2. **and not ... made**, and had not undone the noble work he had done by his behaviour to the commons: **The noble knot** is the tie of his brave deeds by which he had bound his country to him; a tie which he had now, in the tribune's mind, unbound by his arrogance. Steevens compares i. *H. IV.* v. 1. 16, "will you again *unknit* This churlish *knot* of all-abhorred war?"

33. **'I would ... rabble**, do you venture to use those words, you to whose treacherous malignity this mutiny of the people is due?

34. **Cats**, used as a contemptuous epithet, as in *A. W.* iv. 3. 295: **as fitly**, no better.

37. **get you gone**, be off with you as fast as you can. "An idiom; that is to say, a peculiar form of expression, the principle of which cannot be carried out beyond the particular instance. Thus we cannot say *Make thee gone*, or *He got him* (or *himself*) *gone*. Phraseologies on the contrary are paradigmatic, or may serve as models or moulds for others to any extent. All expression is divided into these two kinds" ... (Craik on *J. C.* ii. 4. 2).

43. **baited**, worried, as wild animals are worried; *bait* is the causal of *bite*.

44. **wants**, is without, has lost: **prayers**, i.e. for their ruin.

46. **'em**, *sc.* the tribunes; see note on ii. 3. 54.

47. **unclog**, disencumber, free; cp. *R. II.* i. 3. 200, "The *clogging* burthen of a guilty soul."

48. **to 't**, near it: **You have ... home**, your words have pierced their thick hides.

50. **sup upon myself**, feed upon my bitter thoughts.

52. **puling**, whining like a child, whimpering; cp. *R. J.* iii. 5. 185, "And then to have a wretched *puling* fool, A whining mammet (*i.e.* doll)."

52, 3. **and lament** ... **Juno-like**, and let your grief be expressed in anger such as that to which I, Juno-like, give vent; Juno, the imperious wife of Jupiter.

54. **Fie, fie, fie**, Menenius would reprove her passion.

## SCENE III.

3. **forgot**, forgotten; for the curtailed participle, see Abb. § 343.

4, 5. **my services** ... 'em, my services, like yours, are now directed against my countrymen: **know** ... **yet?** we should now say, do you not yet know me?

6. **no**, surely it can't be so.

8, 9. **but your** ... **tongue**, your identity is proved by your voice; **appeared**, made to appear; some editors adopt Steevens's conjecture *approved*; Abbott (§ 296) thinks that *appear* was perhaps sometimes used as an active verb, and refers to *Cymb.* iii. 4. 148, "That which, *to appear itself*, must not yet be But by self-danger." **favour**, appearance, used by Shakespeare both of the face and of the figure.

10. **a note**, a memorandum directing me; cp. *Cymb.* i. 1. 171, "left these *notes* Of what commands I should be subject to."

12. **hath**, the third person plural in *-th*: see Abb. § 334.

16. **in the heat** ... **division**, while the dissensions among them are still in a blaze.

18. **receive so to heart**, so take to heart; feel so deeply.

19, 20. **are in** ... **aptness**, are in the very mood.

21. **This lies glowing**, the fire of their discord is still alive, and ready to blaze up.

26. **The day** ... **now**, now is the opportunity for them (*sc.* the Volscians).

28. **when she's** ... **out**, when she has quarrelled.

30. **being** ... **country**, being no longer valued by.

31. **He cannot choose**, he (*sc.* Aufidius) cannot help appearing to advantage now; has no alternative but to, etc.; for **choose**, cp. *T. N.* ii. 5. 188, "Thou canst not *choose* but know who I am."

37, 8. **the centurions** ... **entertainment**, the centurions and those under them, at the various quarters assigned to them, being already enrolled; **centurions**, men in command of a century, or company of a hundred men; **distinctly**, separately; cp. *Temp.* i. 2. 200, "on the topmast, The yards and bowsprit. would I flame

*distinctly*, Then meet and join"; **billeted**, literally provided with the billet or ticket which ensured them quarters in the house to which they were told off; for **entertainment**, in this military sense, cp. *A. W.* iv. 1. 17, "He must think us some band of strangers i' the adversary's *entertainment*"; *A. C.* iv. 6. 16, "Canidius and the rest That fell away have *entertainment*, but No honourable trust."

38, 9. **and to be ... warning**, and bound to be ready to march an hour after the trumpet sounds; cp. *K. J.* ii. 1. 201, "Who is it that hath *warn'd* to the walls?" said on hearing the trumpet sound.

41. **set ... action**, *i.e.* by the news he brings.

42. **heartily well met**, I am heartily glad to have met you.

43. **You take ... me**, it is rather I who have reason to be glad.

#### SCENE IV.

2. **thy widows**, the many widows that are now found here.

3. **'fore my wars**, in the presence of the wars I have made; when confronting us in the battles I have fought in Corioli; for **'fore**, cp. *T. C.* i. 3. 215, "What would you *'fore* our tent?"

6. **puny battle**, such as it would be a disgrace to fall in: **Save you**, a courteous form of salutation shortened from 'God save you.'

7. **if it ... will**, if you will be so good.

8. **lies**, dwells.

12. **O world, ... turns!** O world, how sudden are your vicissitudes, how quickly men pass from one thing to another! **now fast sworn**, at one moment bound to each other by the firmest pledges. Warburton remarks, "This fine picture of common friendship is an artful introduction to the sudden league which the poet made him enter into with Aufidius, and no less artful an apology for his commencing enemy to Rome."

13. **Whose ... heart**, cp. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 201-12, especially the two last lines.

15. **who twin ... in love**, who, so to speak, are twins in love; cp. *Cymb.* i. 6. 35, "which can distinguish 'twixt the fiery orbs above and the *twinn'd* stones Upon the number'd beach."

16. **Unseparable**, inseparable; see Abb. § 442: **this hour**, the very same hour in which they were inseparable.

17. **On a ... doit**, upon a difference of the pettiest nature; **of**, regarding; for **doit**, see above, i. 5. 6.

19, 20. **Whose passions ... other**, whose sleep has been broken by the fury of their anger, and by their plots to destroy each other; for **take**, see above, iii. 1. 111.



21. **trick**, trifle, slight accident; cp. *Haml.* iv. 4. 61, "for a fantasy and *trick* of fame."

22. **And ... issues**, "allow their children to intermarry" (Wright).

23. **my love's upon**, my love is given to.

24. **enemy town**, town which should naturally be hostile to me; see Abb. § 22.

25. **give me way**, accede to my wishes, entertain my proposal; **give**, the subjunctive implying the doubtfulness of his doing so.

### SCENE V.

1. **What service is here**, what lazy fellows are they that are in attendance here? the abstract for the concrete.

5. **goodly**, imposing in appearance: **smells well**, is appetizing.

6. **Appear ... guest**, am not attired like a guest; see Stage Direction at head of Scene iv.

7. **What would you have?** what is it that you desire? what is your business here?

8. **go to the door**, leave the house.

9. **entertainment**, treatment.

10. **In being Coriolanus**, "in having derived that name from the sack of Corioli" (Steevens).

12. **companions**, scurvy fellows; as frequently in Shakespeare; e.g. ii. *H. IV.* ii. 4. 102, "'receive,' says he, 'no swaggering companions'"; *M. W.* iii. 1. 123, "this same scall, scurvy, cogging *companion*."

17, 8. **I'll have ... anon**, you shall be soundly rated directly, i.e. by some one to whose words he will pay attention.

23. **avoid**, get out of.

29. **poor gentleman**, mocking his confession of being poor.

31. **Follow ... bits**, follow your usual avocation, that of feasting on scraps from your master's table; for **batten**, cp. *Haml.* iii. 4. 67, "Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed And *batten* on this moor?" Milton, less accurately, uses the word as a transitive verb.

32. **will not**, *sc.* take yourself off.

34. **And I shall**, and so I certainly will; for **And**, used in the sense of 'you are right and,' or 'yes and,' the 'yes' being implied, see Abb. § 97.

36. **canopy**, from "the Gk. *κωνωπεῖον*, *κωνωπεῖον*, an Egyptian bed with mosquito curtains. —Gk. *κωνωπ-*, stem of *κῶνωψ*, a gnat,



mosquito; literally 'cone-faced,' or an animal with a cone-faced head, from some fancied resemblance to a cone; —Gk. *κῶνος*, a cone; and *ὤψ*, a face" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*).

40. I' the city ... **crows**, in the open air.

42. **daws**, chattering fellows; the jackdaw, magpie, etc., being regarded as types of empty talkativeness.

43. I **serve ... master**, I am not a fellow like you.

44. **do you ... master**, have you business with our master that you pretend to be so much above us?

45. Thou ... **and pratest**, you are only wasting your time in chattering in this way: **serve ... trencher**, serve in the food on your dish, do that which you are paid for; **trencher**, properly a wooden plate for cutting things on, from F. *trencher*, to cut.

47, 8. **but for ... within**, if I had not been afraid of disturbing, etc.

49. **what wouldst thou?** what do you want?

53. **Think ... am**, take me for what I really am.

54. **Commands me name**, bids me, obliges me, to name; for the omission of *to* before the infinitive, see Abb. § 349.

57, 8. **thy face ... in't**, your face is that of a man of authority.

58, 9. **though ... vessel**, though your attire is so wretched, your looks are noble. Steevens compares *Cymb.* iv. 2. 354, 5, "The ruin speaks that sometime It was a worthy building," said of Cloten's corpse.

62. **who hath**, speaking of himself in the third person.

63. **particularly**, individually; cp. *Tim.* i. 1. 46, "my free drift Halts not *particularly*," i.e. does not apply to any single person.

68-70. **a good ... bear me**, which may well put you in mind, and stand in attestation of, the hatred you are bound to feel towards me; for **memory**, = memorial, cp. *Lear*, iv. 7. 7, "These weeds are *memories* of those worser hours."

71. **envy**, hatred.

72. **dastard**, cowardly.

75. **Hoop'd ... Rome**, driven out of Rome with shouts of hatred and contempt. Most modern editors follow Hanmer in reading *Whoop'd*, but the spelling of the folios is more correct, the word being from the F. *houper*, to call aloud, and the *w* originally having no place in it. So, in *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 203, we have "out of all *hooping*."

76. **out of hope**, owing to any hope.

79. **mere spite**, utter hatred.

80. To be full quit, with the object of fully revenging myself.

82. A heart of *wreak*, a heart animated by resentment; of denoting the quality; for *wreak*, cp. *T. A.* iv. 3. 33, "Take *wreak* on Rome for this ingratitude." The verb is of course very common: that wilt revenge, so that you desire to revenge.

83, 4. *maims* Of shame, dishonouring losses; the losses constituting the shame; cp. "eyes of blood," i.e. bloody eyes, *K. J.* iv. 2. 265, "looks of favour," i.e. favouring looks, i. *H. IV.* v. 1. 31; "terms of reason," i.e. reasonable terms, *H. V.* v. 2. 357.

84. seen through thy country, which your country shows from one end to the other; though there seems to be also the idea of rents in a garment.

85. And make ... turn, and turn my wretchedness to good account for yourself and your country.

88. *canker'd*, spiteful, venomous; cp. *K. J.* ii. 1. 194, "A woman's will: a *canker'd* grandam's will"; literally corroded, eaten as by a cancer: *spleen*, spite; the spleen being supposed to be the seat of anger, spite, etc.

89. the under fiends, the fiends of hell: if so be, if perchance.

90. to prove ... tired, you are too weary to make trial of further hazards; to further risk what fortune may have in store for you.

93. ancient, inveterate.

97. but to thy shame, except with the result of shame to you.

101. Should ... things, to mend the metre, Pope gave "Should from yond cloud speak to me things divine," and Dyce conjectures "Should from out yonder cloud speak divine things."

104. where against, against which; so *whereto* = to what thing, end, etc. See Abb. § 203.

105. My grained ash, the hard-grained staff of my lance; ash, being a very tough wood, is much employed for the handles of tools, as it was of old for those of weapons.

106. And scarr'd the moon, for this hyperbole Delius compares *W. T.* iii. 3. 92, "the ship boring the moon with her mainmast"; others follow Rowe in reading *scar'd*, i.e. frightened, comparing *R. III.* v. 3. 341, "Amaze the welkin with your broken staves": clip, embrace; as frequently in Shakespeare.

107. the anvil of my sword, which has been to my sword what the anvil is to the iron that is hammered and shaped on it.

111. loved, *sc.* dearly.

112. Sigh'd truer breath, poured forth more sincerely sighs of love; Malone compares *V. A.* 189, "I'll sigh celestial breath, whose gentle wind Shall cool the heat of this descending sun"; *T. N. K.* v. 1. 125, 6, "And vow that lover never yet made sigh Truer than I."

113. **more ... heart**, causes my heart to beat with greater rapture ; **rapt**, proleptic, enraptured thereby.

115. **Bestride my threshold**, step over my threshold when first entering it as her home. Steevens points out that a Roman bride, on her entry to her husband's house, was lifted over the threshold, lest she should even touch it with her foot. To have done so, would in their belief have been an evil omen.

116. **a power on foot**, a force already assembled.

116-8. **and I ... for 't**, and I had resolved either to hew your shield from your brawny arm, or lose my own arm in the attempt ; **Once more** does not mean that he had ever done so before, but that he was once more to make the attempt, and either succeed in it or perish ; **target**, a diminutive of *targe*, a shield ; **brawn**, muscle, hence muscular arm ; **out**, thoroughly ; cp. *H. VIII.* ii. 4. 140, "if ... thy parts Sovereign and pious else, could speak thee *out*, The queen of earthly queens" ; *Temp.* iv. 1. 101, "And be a boy right *out*."

119. **several**, distinct, different ; cp. *T. G.* iv. 4. 150, "I have wept a hundred *several* times."

122. **Unbuckling helms**, each trying to tear off the other's helmet : **fisting**, pounding with our fists.

123. **And waked ... nothing**, and have woke up half dead with this imaginary struggle.

124. **to Rome**, against Rome.

125. **all**, *sc.* our able-bodied males.

128. **o'erbear**, sweep everything before us ; cp. *Oth.* i. 3. 56, "for my particular grief Is of so flood-gate and *o'erbearing* nature."

132. **Though ... itself**, though my expedition is not directed against the city itself : **You bless me, gods !** *i.e.* I could not have asked any greater blessing than this.

133. **absolute**, complete in everything that becomes a man ; cp. *A. C.* iv. 14. 117, "Most *absolute* lord."

133, 4. **if thou ... revenges**, if you desire yourself to show the way in the execution of your own revenge.

135. **my commission**, the force I am commissioned to lead.

135-7. **set down ... ways**, settle the manner of your attack ; it is also possible that **set down** is used absolutely, meaning begin your siege, as in i. 2. 28, i. 3. 94, **thine own ways** being used adverbially, = in your own way, in whatever way you think best, as is frequent with *come*, and *go*.

138, 9. **Whether ... remote**, whether it seems best to you to thunder at the gates of Rome itself, or to make inroads into outlying portions of their territory.



140. To fright ... destroy, for the ellipsis, cp. above, i. l. 209, 233.

141. commend, present with commendation.

144. Yet ... much, and yet it was no slight enmity I bore you.

146. By my hand, a petty form of adjuration; **strucken**, Shakespeare uses *struck*, *strucken*, and *stricken* for the participle.

147, 8. and yet ... him, and yet I had a misgiving, a suspicion, that his mean attire by no means represented truly what he was; for gave, cp. *H. VIII.* v. 3. 109, "My mind gave me ... Ye blew the fire that burns ye."

150. as one ... top, just as one would do when setting a top a-spinning.

152, 3. he had, ... term it, cp. *M. N. D.* iv. l. 213-20, where Bottom, awaking from his dream, is equally at a loss for words to describe his sensations.

154-6. would I...think, may I be hanged if I did not think there was more in him than I was capable of conceiving.

157. simply, in a word: rarest, most wonderful.

160. wot, see note on iv. l. 27.

162. Nay, ... that, it does not matter whom I mean; I am not going to say whom I mean.

164. neither, used by Shakespeare after a negative expressed or implied, where we should say *either*.

166. Faith ... that, in truth, it's not easy to know what to say about that.

172. I would ... nations, of all nations in the world I would rather belong to any than the Roman.

172, 3. I had ... man, I would just as soon be a man condemned to death; had as lieve, should hold as dear; lieve, A.S. *leof*, *lióf*, dear, pleasing.

178, 9. I do not say ... him, well, I don't go so far as to say 'thwack our general'; but he was always a match for him.

180, 1. Come, ... him, come, as fellow servants and good friends we may say among ourselves what we really think; and so I do not hesitate to admit that Marcius was always more than a match for our master. The Second Servant, who a short while before had asserted that Aufidius was worth six of Marcius, now that he finds which way the wind is blowing, and that he need not be afraid of being betrayed to his master, turns round and admits that after all his master was no match for Marcius.

182, 3. directly, without ambiguity: to say ... on 't, to speak the truth about it. Wright points out that **troth**, when meaning *truth*, not *faith*, is always used by Shakespeare with *speak* or *say*.



183. **scotched**, to *scotch* is to cut with narrow incisions; the notion, says Skeat, being taken from the slight cut inflicted by a *scutcher*, or riding whip; cp. *Macb.* iii. 2. 13, "We have *scotch'd* the snake, not kill'd it."

184. **carbonado**, a piece of meat cut crossways for broiling, a rasher; the word, which is originally Spanish, means nothing more than meat broiled, from Spanish *carbon*, charcoal.

185. **given**, inclined, disposed; frequent in Shakespeare both with and without a qualifying adverb.

188. **he is ... within**, the nobles at dinner make so much of him, show him such attentions; **on**, where we should say *of*, as frequently in Shakespeare.

189. **at upper end**, cp. iv. 7. 4, "The grace 'fore meat and the thanks at end"; and see note on iii. 3. 138.

189-91. **no questions ... him**, so far from venturing to show any doubt in their welcome by putting questions to him, the senators stand bareheaded in his presence.

191, 2. **makes ... him**, treats him with the devotion he would show to the woman he loved.

192. **sanctifies ... hand**, "considers the touch of his hand as holy" (Malone).

192, 3. **turns up ... discourse**, listens to everything he says with rapt attention; the phrase is now used chiefly of a sanctimonious look of devotion, and probably the servant here means that Aufidius treated Marcius with an exaggerated reverence.

193. **the bottom**, the conclusion and most important part.

195, 6. **by the ... table**, all the nobles present voting him an equal share in the command with Aufidius, and entreating him to accept the offer; **by the entreaty and grant**, what grammarians call the figure *hysteron proteron*, the latter part before the former part, 'the cart before the horse,' as we say colloquially.

196, 7. **sowl .. ears**, "Moore gives 'Sowl. To seize a swine by the ear. 'Wool 'a sowle a hog?' is a frequent inquiry into the qualifications of a dog, etc. *Suffolk Words*, etc." (Dyce, *Gloss.*). Steevens quotes Heywood's *Love's Mistress*, iv. 1. 75, "Venus will *sole me by the ears* for this"; and Tyrwhitt, Lord Strafford's *Letters*, "A lieutenant *scol'd him well by the ears*, and drew him by the hair about the room."

198. **passage**, way to Rome: **polled**, swept clear before him; literally cropped, shaven.

199. **like**, likely.

204. **directitude**, Malone conjectures that the servant means *discreditude*; Collier's MS. Corrector, *dejectitude*.

207. **in blood**, with his blood up for the fight, full of spirit;

see note on i. 1. 149: **burrows**, holes in which to shelter themselves; the term applied to the holes of rabbits; merely a variation of *borough*.

208. **conies**, rabbits; cp. *Psalms*, civ. 18, "The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and the rocks for the *conies*": **revel** ... **him**, take part with him in all the wild delight of slaughter; **all**, used adverbially.

210. **presently**, almost immediately.

210, 1. **you shall have**, you may make sure of hearing.

211-3. 'tis ... **lips**, the execution of this business is, so to speak, but an incident in their feast, and a thing to be finished off before they rise from the table.

215, 6. **This peace .. ballad-makers**, the only result of this peace is that swords grow rusty, tailors become more plentiful (in consequence of men having time to pay attention to their dress), and that, for want of better occupation, numbers turn ballad-makers.

218, 9. **it's sprightly ... vent**, the writer in the *Ed. Rev.* already referred to, in the number for Oct. 1872, defends the reading of the folios, *sprightly walking*, and interprets **full of vent** as a metaphor from hunting. "Vent," he says, "is a technical term in hunting to express the scenting of the game by the hounds employed in the chase ... when the hound vents anything, he pauses to verify the scent, and then full of excitement, strains in the leash to be after the game that is thus perceived to be afoot." Then, quoting from two old hunting ballads, 'My hound did sticke, and seem'd to *vent* some beast,' and 'And when my hound doth straine upon good *vent*,' he adds, "To strain at the lyam or leash 'upon good vent' is in Shakespeare's phrase to be 'full of vent,' or in other words keenly excited, full of pluck and courage, of throbbing energy and impetuous desire, in a word, full of all the kindling stir and commotion of anticipated conflict. ... War is naturally personified as a trained hound roused to animated motion by the scent of the game, giving tongue, and straining in the slips at the near prospect of the exciting chase ... The description thus includes quickened motion [**sprightly walking**], eager tongue [**audible**], and intense physical excitement [**full of vent**]." To this Wright objects that the epithets applied to peace "appear to correspond to the epithets applied to war, but in an inverted order; 'insensible' corresponding to 'spritely,' 'sleepy' to 'waking,' 'deaf' to 'audible,' and 'mulled' to 'full of vent.' And as 'mulled' signifies 'flat, insipid,' 'full of vent' would seem to be either effervescent, working, ready to burst the cask, or full of scent" ... But granting a correspondency between the epithets (though **deaf** can hardly be said to correspond with **audible**) we have no proof that **mulled** meant in Shakespeare's day, 'flat, insipid.' At present

the term is generally used of wine boiled with sugar and spices. But this modern sense Skeat says is due to a total loss of the original sense of the word. "The older term is *mulled ale*, a corruption of *muld-ale* or *mold-ale*, literally a funeral ale or banquet ... Cp. Lowland Scotch *mulde-mete*, literally mould-meat, a funeral banquet." In this uncertainty as to the figures intended I have preferred to retain the folio reading **sprightly walking**.

219. **a very apoplexy**, a complete, utter, apoplexy.

221. **Reason**, and there is good reason for this ; cp. *K. J.* v. 2. 130, "He is prepared, and *reason* too he should."

222. **The wars ... money**, give me wars for my money, *i.e.* I am all for war, in favour of war.

223. **as cheap**, held in no more estimation : **They**, Aufidius and his guests.

224. **In ... in**, we must be off into the house and attend to our duties, not be found talking here.

#### SCENE VI.

2-4. **His remedies ... hurry**, in the present peaceful state of things the efforts of his friends to remedy his misfortunes, to reinstate him in his former position, which were a short time ago so vigorously made, have been entirely dropped : **His**, used objectively, not the remedies he would apply to the state of things, but the remedies which his friends endeavoured to apply on his behalf.

5. **Blush ... well**, ashamed to find that things go well without his help ; **the world**, Rome, the *orbis terrarum* in the opinion of the Romans ; cp. *J. C.* i. 2. 311, "I will do so : till then, think of *the world*."

5, 6. **who rather ... behold**, who would prefer to see.

7. **Dissentious ... streets**, gangs of mutinous fellows filling the streets and interrupting all business ; **pestering**, "a shortened form of *impester*, by loss of the first syllable, as in the case of *fence* for *defence*, *sport* for *disport*, *story* for *history*, etc. Cotgrave explains the F. pp. *empestré* as 'impestered, intricatèd, intangled, incumbered. — O. F. *empestrer* ... Mod. F. *empêtrer* ... properly to hobble a horse while he feeds afield ... from the mediæval Lat. *pastorium*, a clog for horses at pasture" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*).

9. **friendly**, adverb, in a friendly way.

10. **We stood ... time**, it is lucky we made our stand when we did ; **it**, used indefinitely.

11. **kind**, courteous, friendly.



12. **Your Coriolanus**, that Coriolanus of whom you were so proud.

13. **but with**, except by.

17. **temporized**, adapted himself to the times.

20. **God-den**, see note on ii. 1. 84.

24. **wish'd**, could wish ; subjunctive.

27. **comely**, pleasant in appearance ; literally becoming, suitable

29. **confusion**, destruction.

31. **past all thinking**, beyond conception.

33. **Without assistance**, without assistants, associates ; the abstract for the concrete.

32. **affecting ... throne**, aiming at individual despotism ; cp. *Macb.* i. 5. 71, "solely sovereign sway and masterdom."

34. **by this**, *sc.* time : **to all our lamentation**, to the bitter grief of us all ; **our**, used in its old signification as a genitive = of us, the adjective **all** qualifying the *us* involved in it.

35. **gone forth**, been allowed to become : **found**, *have* must be supplied.

37. **still**, peaceful.

39. **Reports**, who reports : **powers**, armies.

40. **in**, into.

41. **the deepest ... war**, the fiercest cruelty that war can display ; *i.e.* sparing nobody and nothing ; **the**, expressing the well known nature of war.

45. **inshell'd**, withdrawn into his shell ; like the horns of a snail : **stood for Rome**, stood up in defence of Rome.

46, 7. **what talk ... Marcius** ? what is the good of talking about Marcius ? *i.e.* there is no good.

48. **break with us**, quarrel, break truce, with us.

49. **record**, accented on the latter syllable.

50. **have been**, have occurred.

51. **my age**, my lifetime ; cp. above, iii. 1. 7, "in our *ages*" : **reason with**, talk with and inquire of.

53. **shall chance**, the future where we should use the subjunctive ; **your information**, him who brings you this information ; again the abstract for the concrete.

54. **who bids beware**, and who therefore deserves thanks rather than punishment ; cp. "commands me name," iv. 5. 54.

55. **me**, emphatic.

57. **earnestness**, anxiety.



59. **turns their countenances**, makes them look sour and gloomy; Malone compares, for the figure of milk turning sour, *Tim.* iii. 1. 57, "Has friendship such a faint and milky heart It *turns* in less than two nights?"

59, 60. 'Tis this ... raising, 'tis this slave's raising, or invention.

62. **seconded**, confirmed by others.

62. 3. **and more ... deliver'd**, and more reports, and those of a more terrible character, have been brought in; cp. i. 9. 32.

65. **How ... know**, though with what probability of truth, I cannot say.

67. **as between**, as that which is between.

69. **Raised only**, the report has been raised only.

70. **The very trick on 't**, that is the very device which has led to this report.

72. **atone**, be made one, be reconciled; from *at* and *one*; more generally in Shakespeare as a transitive verb.

75. **fearful**, terrible.

76. **Associated**, who is in joint command with.

77. **and have**, and they (*sc.* the troops) have.

78. **O'erborne their way**, carried everything before them; swept away all obstacles in their path; see note on iv. 5. 128: **took**, taken.

80. **made good work**, brought about a pretty state of affairs.

81. **You have ... daughters**, by rendering possible this invasion of the Volseians, you are a party to the enormities we may expect them to be guilty of.

82. **the city leads**, the lead with which the roofs of your houses are covered. Shakespeare is of course thinking of English houses.

83. **to your noses**, before your very faces.

85. **in their cement**, as they stand strongly held together by their mortar.

86. **Your franchises ... stood**, those privileges of yours about which you made such a fuss, on exercising which you insisted so strongly; **franchises**, literally privileged liberties; O. F. *franc*, free.

86, 7. **confined ... bore**, narrowed down to nothing; **an auger's bore**, the small hole which an auger (awl) would make; **auger**, a corruption of *nauger*, like *adder*, properly *naddere*, *umpire*, properly *numpire*, the initial *n-* being absorbed by the indefinite article; cp. *Macb.* ii. 3. 128, "where our fate, Hid in an *auger-hole*, may rush, and seize us."

89. **If Marcius ... Volscians**, if it should turn out to be true that Marcius has allied himself with Volscians. Rowe reads *the Volscians*, but the omission seems to give the force of 'such foes as the Volscians.'

90. **He is their god**, he is to them as some divinity.

91, 2. **Made ... better**, cp. *Cymb.* ii. 4. 83-5, "the cutter (*i.e.* sculptor) Was *as another nature*, dumb : out went her, Motion and breath left out."

93. **us brats**, us who, as opposed to him, are but mere puny children.

96. **your apron-men**, your wretched mechanics ; cp. *A. C.* v. 2. 210, "mechanic slaves *With greasy aprons*, rules, and hammers."

96-8. **that stood ... garlic-eaters**, who attached so much importance to the opinions and demands of artizans and the rabble who delight in such stinking food as garlic ; cp. *M. M.* iii. 2. 195, "he would mouth with a beggar, though she smelt brown bread and *garlic*."

100. **Did ... fruit**, an allusion to the plucking of the fruit in the garden of the Hesperides, guarded by a dragon, the eleventh labour imposed upon Hercules by Eurystheus ; see note on iv. 1. 17.

101, 2. **Ay, ... other**, yes, indeed, and you will have pale faces, will be paralysed by fear, before you find it to be otherwise ; **other**, used adverbially, as in *Oth.* iv. 2. 13, "if you think *other*, Remove your thought."

103. **Do smilingly revolt**, are only too glad to revolt : **who resist**, any who resist.

104, 5. **Are mock'd ... fools**, are merely jeered at for their stupid display of bravery, and rewarded for their foolish constancy by being slaughtered ; Steevens compares *T. C.* iii. 3. 316, "I had rather be a tick in a sheep than such a *valiant ignorance*."

106. **Your enemies ... him**, your enemies, who naturally would be his enemies, find that there is something in him, even if you were unable to do so, you who ought to have been much more ready to do so.

107. **all**, wholly.

108. **have**, should have ; the subjunctive implying doubt : **Who shall ask it ? who will venture to ask it ?**

109. **for shame**, on account of shame ; very shame will prevent their doing so.

110. **such pity**, *sc.* and no more ; *i.e.* none at all.

111. **for**, as regards.

112. **they charged**, they would, in so doing, be urging ; cp. above, ii. 2. 16, and see Abb. § 361.

113. **should do**, might be expected to do.

115. **brand**, lighted torch.

117. **You have ... hands**, "you have made a nice business. Cp. *H. VIII.* v. 4. 74, 'Ye have made a fine hand, fellows'" (Wright).

118. **have crafted fair**, have shown a fine ingenuity; with a play upon the word *craft* in the sense of occupation, industry.

119, 20. **such as ... help**, more incapable of being cured than any trembling ever was: **help**, = cure, is very frequent in Shakespeare.

122. **your clusters**, your rabble who thronged the city in mutiny.

124. **They'll ... again**, as they shouted with hatred and derision when he left the city for exile, so they will shout, though in a different key, when he returns a triumphant conqueror of themselves.

124, 5. **The ... men**, second among warriors to Marcius only: **obeys his points**, follows his instructions; *point*, "a signal given by the blast of a trumpet: 'To a loud trumpet and a point of war,' ii. *H. IV.* iv. 1. 32. Hence = direction, command" (Schmidt).

126-8. **desperation ... them**, cp. *W. T.* ii. 3. 210-2, "Do not repent these things, for they are heavier Than all thy woes can stir; therefore betake thee To nothing but despair."

131. **hooting at**, in the act of expressing your delight by hooting.

134. **coxcombs**, heads; literally the tuft on the head of a cock, and hence used ludicrously or contemptuously for head.

135. **tumble down**, strike off; with the idea of the ease with which he will do it.

136. **pay you**, requite you.

137. **into one coal**, so that we became one indistinct burning heap.

138. **We have deserved it**, we should have no right to complain.

143-5. **and though ... will**, if these words in which the citizen labours to excuse himself are not intended to be merely self-contradictory, they may possibly mean 'though at the instigation of the tribunes we readily gave our assent to his banishment, we were persuaded to do so contrary to our inclinations.'

146. **you voices!** you fellows who are voice and nothing else; ever ready to shout and gabble on the least provocation.

147. **cry, pack**; see note on iii. 3. 120: **Shall's**, i.e. us for we;



cp. *W. T.* i. 2. 178, "We are yours in the garden : *shall*'s attend you there?" said by the queen. "*Shall* originally meaning necessity or obligation, and therefore not denoting an *action* on the part of the subject, was used in the south of England as an impersonal verb ... So Chaucer 'us oughte,' and we also find 'as us wol,' i.e. 'as it is pleasing to us'" (Abb. § 215).

148. O, ay, what else? O, yes, there is nothing better to do; said in a desponding tone.

150. side, party.

159, 60. Would ... lie! I would gladly give half my wealth to find that this rumour was false.

## SCENE VII.

2. witchcraft, fascination.

3, 4. Your soldiers ... end, he is the beginning, middle, and end of their talk at meals; instead of saying grace before and after meat, they have no words but of him.

5. you are darken'd, your reputation is eclipsed; cp. ii. 1. 246, *A. C.* iii. 1. 24, "and ambition, The soldier's virtue, rather makes choice of loss, Than gain which *darkens* him."

6. your own, sc. troops, who should be wholly devoted to you.

7, 8. Unless, ... design, except by resorting to measures which would cripple our purpose: more proudlier, the double comparative adverb.

9. Even to my person, even to me personally, not merely towards others.

11. In that's no changeling, is but consistent; a changeling is a child who has been substituted in the cradle by fairies, or witches, for another child.

12. What, that which.

13. I mean ... particular, I mean as far as your individual good is concerned.

15. Had ... yourself, had singly taken upon yourself the management of affairs.

18. his account, the account which, sooner or later, he will have to render of his conduct.

20. its ... apparent, seems (but is not) equally clear.

21. bears ... fairly, acts in everything with honourable motive.

22. good husbandry, due regard for the interests of; for husbandry, care of one's business, cp. *M. V.* iii. 4. 25, "I commit into your hands The *husbandry* and manage of my house."



23. **achieve**, succeed in what he undertakes ; see note on i. 9. 33.

26. **our account**, the reckoning which will have to be made between us.

27. **carry**, capture.

28. **sits down**, *i.e.* to besiege them.

29. **are his**, are pledged to him.

32. **in the repeal**, in recalling him home.

34, 5. **who takes it ... nature**, who captures it by the imperious fascination with which nature has endowed him. A reference to the fabulous power attributed to the osprey of fascinating the fish on which it preys. Steevens quotes Peele's *Battle of Alcazar*, i. 1, "I will provide thee with a princely *osprey*, That as she flieth over fish in pools, The fish shall turn their glittering bellies up, And thou shalt take thy liberal choice of all." Of course the power thus attributed is nothing more than an exaggeration of the swiftness and ease with which the bird takes its prey. "The structure of the Osprey," says Harting, *The Ornithology of Shakespeare*, p. 41, "is wonderfully adapted to his habits, and an examination of the feet of this bird will prove how admirably contrived they are for grasping and holding a slippery fish."

37. **Carry ... even**, wear his honours with moderation ; **whether ... pride**, whether his inability to act discreetly was due to his pride.

38, 9. **Which ... man**, pride, with which men of uninterrupted good fortune are always tainted.

40, 1. **To fail ... lord of**, in failing to turn to good account those advantages he possessed ; **To fail**, the infinitive used indefinitely.

41, 2. **or whether ... thing**, or whether it was his stubborn nature that was incapable of changing itself ; for **or whether**, cp. i. 3. 69.

42, 3. **not moving ... cushion**, his nature which, so used to war, could not adapt itself to peaceful matters ; **the casque**, or helmet, symbolical of war ; **the cushion**, of civil administration : **commanding peace**, ruling in matters of a peaceful character.

44. **austerity and garb**, a hendiadys for austere garb, the austere fashion of doing things which the necessity of stern discipline in war had taught him.

46, 7. **As he ... him**, for he has touches of all these failings, though I may admit that they are but touches of such weaknesses, not the weaknesses fully developed ; for **spices**, cp. *H. VIII.* ii. 3. 26, "and so would you, For all this *spice* of your hypocrisy."

48. **So ... banish'd**, the consequence of his being feared was that before long he became hated, the consequence of his being hated was that before long he was driven into exile.

48, 9. **but ... utterance**, Johnson explains, "He has a merit for no other purpose than to destroy it by boasting it," and this seems to me to be the meaning except that to **utterance** I would give the less restricted and older meaning of publishing, putting forth, not necessarily in an offensive way. The gist of the passage is that every good gift conferred upon him is counterbalanced by some weakness; he has raised himself to a high position by his valour, but his pride has marred his good fortune; he has by his force of character made himself master of great opportunities, but his defect of judgment has caused him to misuse those opportunities; he has the faculty of impressing men with his authority, but he cannot recognize the occasions on which that faculty should not be exercised; in every case some "vicious mole of nature" counteracts the qualities which would otherwise make his character so perfect. For a very similar train of thought, cp. *Haml.* i. 4. 23-38. For the transposition of **but**, see Abb. §§ 128, 420.

49, 50. **So our ... time**, it is doubtful whether this means 'our virtues depend (for their efficacy) upon the way in which they are regarded by those among whom we live,' or 'our virtues depend (for their efficacy) upon the manner in which we interpret, and adapt ourselves to, surrounding circumstances. The latter view agrees better with the explanation I have given of the preceding lines, but it is doubtful whether *the interpretation* can mean 'the interpretation we put.'

51-3. **And power ... done**, if the reading is genuine here, the meaning probably is 'and power (*i.e.* a man in high position) however much it may consider itself deserving of praise, has no such certain grave of its reputation as a chair from which it pronounces its own eulogy.' Various emendations have been proposed, such as *hair*, *cheer*, *care*, for **chair**; *tongue so eloquent*, for **tomb so evident**; *as eloquent as a tear*, for **so evident as a chair**.

54. **One fire ... nail**, cp. *T. G.* ii. 4. 192, 3, "Even as one heat another heat expels, Or as one nail by strength drives out another."

55. **Rights ... fail**, rights give way to other and better rights; power, however great, has to yield when it meets greater power; **falter** is Dyce's conjecture for *fouler* of the folios. Other conjectures are *founder*, *foil'd are*, *suffer*, *sunder*.

57. **Thou art ... mine**, your fortunes, seemingly so high, will really be at their lowest ebb; and before long you will be at my mercy.

## ACT V. SCENE I.

2. **sometime**, but a short time ago.

3. In a ... **particular**, with a special affection; **particular**, personal relation; cp. *H. VIII.* iii. 2. 189, "so your hand and heart Should ... As 'twere in love's *particular*, be more To me, your friend, than any"; *A. C.* iv. 9. 20, "Forgive me in thine own *particular*."

4. **But what o' that?** but that signifies nothing.

5, 6. **knee ... mercy**, make your way on your knees, and in that suppliant posture endeavour to gain access to his heart; **coy'd**, showed himself reluctant; disdained; cp. *T. S.* ii. 1. 245, "'Twas told me you were rough and *coy* and sullen." Elsewhere the verb occurs only in *M. N. D.* iv. 1. 2, and there in the sense of caressing; the word is ultimately from the Lat. *quietus*, still, and so means retired, bashful.

8. **He would ... me**, he would not give any sign of recognizing me.

10. **I urged ... acquaintance**, I dwelt on our long years of intimacy.

11, 2. **Coriolanus ... to**, when addressed as 'Coriolanus,' he would not acknowledge that title as belonging to him: **forbad all names**, forbade us to call him by any name, for to none would he answer.

14, 5. **Till he ... Rome**, till he had shaped himself a name commemorating his destruction of Rome by fire; as though he were a smith working with fire: *forge* is from the Lat. *fabrica*, a workshop.

16. **wreck'd fair Rome**, the folios give *wrack'd for*, which in most modern editors is altered to *rack'd for*, and explained as 'made great efforts for.' But no instance has been cited of the verb in this neuter sense, or of its being coupled with *for*. I have therefore followed Dyce in accepting Williams's conjecture **wreck'd fair**, **fair** having been first suggested by Hamner.

18. **minded**, reminded; cp. *H. V.* iv. 3. 13, "I do thee wrong to *mind* thee of it": **royal**, king-like, supremely noble.

19. **When ... expected**, especially when it was little expected; as though Shakespeare had written 'that it was *the more* royal to pardon the less it was expected.'

20. **a bare petition**, a mere petition, bare of any such extenuations as they might be expected to urge for their injustice in banishing him. Somewhat similar is the thought in *H. VIII.* v. 3. 123-7, "I come not to hear such flattery now ... They (*i.e.* the



flattering terms) are too thin and *bare* to hide offences. To me you cannot reach, you play the spaniel, And think with wagging of your tongue to win me."

23. *offer'd*, endeavoured; cp. *T. C.* ii. 3. 67, "Agamemnon is a fool to *offer* to command Achilles."

25, 6. **He could not ... chaff**, he could not pause to pick them out from among a heap of such miserable wretches as the people in general; **noisome**, troublesome, offensive; ultimately from *Lat. in odio habere*, to hold in hatred, disgust; now applied more especially to diseases, offensive smells.

26-8. **he said ... offence**, he said it would be a waste of mercy for the sake of two or three, whose regard was after all worth but little, to spare the rest and endure their hateful existence.

31, 2. **and you ... moon**, and your reek goes up to the skies. Delius compares *Ham.* iii. 3. 36, "O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven."

34. **In this ... help**, in this strait in which help is needed as it was never needed before.

37. **More than ... make**, more than any army we could get together in so sudden an emergency.

38. **I'll not meddle**, I will have nothing to do with the business.

39. **should I do? could I possibly do?** see Abb. § 325.

41. **towards Marcius**, in approaching Marcius with entreaty: **say**, suppose.

42. **Return me**, should send me back. Wright points out that in this transitive sense we now use the verb of things only, not of persons, and compares *Tim.* iii. 6. 40, "I hope it remains not unkindly with your lordship that I *returned* you an empty messenger."

43-5. **what then? ... unkindness?** what would be the result, except that I should come back as a friend whose prayers had been rejected, and wounded to my soul with his unkindness? **what then?** is almost equivalent to 'with no other result'; for **grief-shot**, cp. *T. S.* iii. 2. 56, "shoulder-*shotten*"; *H. V.* iii. 5. 14, "nook-*shotten*."

46-7. **after ... well**, proportioned to your good intentions; for **that** followed by *as*, cp. *J. C.* i. 2. 33, "I have not from your eyes *that* gentleness ... *as* I was wont to have"; **after the measure**, here adverbial, and = accordingly, proportionately.

48. **hear me**, listen to me favourably, not treat me as he treated Cominius: **to bite his lip**, that he should show such contempt.

49. **hum**, cp. *Macb.* iii. 6. 42, "The cloudy messenger turns me his back, And *hums*, as who should say 'You'll rue the



time That clogs me with this answer.'” So we speak of ‘humming and haing’ at a thing, *i.e.* muttering ‘hum!’ and ‘ha!’ in token of displeasure or hesitation: **unhearts**, disheartens.

50. **He ... well**, the attempt to persuade him was not made at an opportune moment; for **taken**, cp. *Hamlet*. iii. 3. 80, *He took my father grossly, full of bread.*”

51. **unfill'd**, being unfilled.

52. **pout ... morning**, look at everything in a fretful mood, with, a jaundiced eye: **unapt**, disinclined. These reflections come appositely from one who has described himself as Menenius does in ii. 1.

54. These ... **conveyances**, cp. above, i. 1. 125-8.

55. **feeding**, food; **suppler**, less stubborn.

56, 7. **watch ... request**, wait for the moment when he will be in the mood to listen to my request; **watch**, probably with a reference to the sense in which the word is used in falconry, that of not allowing the hawk any sleep till it became tame and obedient to command; cp. *T. S.* iv. 1. 198, “Another way I have to man my haggard ... That is, to *watch* her, as we *watch* these kites, That bate and beat and will not be obedient”; *Oth.* iii. 3. 23, “I’ll *watch* him tame and talk him out of patience”; **dieted**, brought into the proper condition, as the body is by a prescribed diet; cp. ii. *H. IV.* iv. 1. 64, “To *diet* rank minds sick of happiness”; *Cymb.* iii. 4. 183, “Thou art all the comfort The gods will *diet* me with.”

58. **set upon him**, attack him with entreaty.

59. **the very road**, the true, direct, path.

60. **lose your way**, fail to reach his heart: **prove**, make trial.

61. **Speed how it will**, whatever the result may be; the original sense of the substantive *speed* is *success*.

61, 2. **I shall ... success**, it will not be long before I know the result of my attempt; for **success**, see note on i. 1. 250.

63. **does sit in gold**, sits enthroned in awful majesty. Steevens compares *H. VIII.* i. 1. 19, “All clinquant, *all in gold, like heathen gods*”; and Homer, *Iliad*, viii. 442, Ἀνδρὸς δὲ χρύσειον ἐπὶ θρόνον εἰρυσσα Ζεὺς Ἐξέρο, translated by Pope, “Th’ eternal Thunderer *sat throned in gold.*”

64, 5. **his injury ... pity**, his sense of wrong done him chaining up his mercy; we have a somewhat similar figure in *K. J.* ii. 1. 188, “Her *injury* the *beadle* to her sin.”

66. **’Twas ... ‘Rise,’** he could hardly bring himself to tell me to rise from my knees.

67. **with ... hand**, by a wave of his hand without speaking.

67-9. **what he ... conditions**, this passage is generally believed to be corrupt. If genuine, it probably means, he sent in writing after I had been dismissed a statement of what he would do, and what he would not do; he being bound by an oath to fulfil the terms on which he had made alliance with the Volscians. Staunton would read *no* for *his*, explaining "what he would not, he bound himself to yield on no conditions"; **Bound** seems to be an instance of the participle with the pronoun implied; see Abb. § 379.

71. **Unless ... wife**, probably elliptical for, unless we may consider the intended intercession of his mother and his wife in the light of hope; for *his*, *from*'s and *in*'s have been conjectured.

## SCENE II.

2. You guard like **men**, you keep good watch and ward; **by your leave**, pardon me.

8. **Good my friends**, for this transposition, see Abb. § 13.

10. **it is ... blanks**, it is any odds; here **lots** must be taken to mean those papers in a lottery which awarded a prize, as opposed to **blanks**, blank papers, which awarded nothing.

12. 3, **the virtue ... passable**, your name does not serve as a passport; **virtue**, efficacy.

14. **lover**, dear friend; formerly frequent in this sense, but now used only of one who is in love with a woman, and has won her affections.

15. **book**, record; cp. *Macb.* i. 5. 63, "Your face, my thane, is as a *book* where men May read strange matters": **whence**, out of which.

16. **haply amplified**, possibly exaggerated.

17. **magnified**, Hanmer's conjecture for *verified*, the reading of the folios. It is difficult to believe that Shakespeare could have written *verified* (a word never used by him in the sense it would be necessary to give it here) and followed it immediately after by *verity*, while on the other hand the transcriber or compositor may easily have repeated the final syllable of **ever**. A very similar error is probably found in *Lear*, iii. 7. 65, where we have "All *cruels* else subscribed," and for which we should, I believe, read "All *cruelties* else subscribed." Lettsom proposes to repeat **amplified**, in which case **have** must be emphatic; Leo conjectures *glorified*.

18, 9. **with all ... suffer**, so far as was possible without lapsing into untruth.

20. **subtle**, slippery; literally fine, slender, then insinuating, sly, morally slippery. Steevens compares Ben Jonson,

"Tityus's breast is counted the *subtlest* bowling ground in all Tartarus."

21. **have ... throw**, have shot beyond the mark ; **the throw**, the distance which the bowl should have been bowled.

22. **Have ... leasing**, "have almost given the lie such a sanction as to render it current" (Malone) ; but what gave it such a sanction was the fact that it was the praise of a man whom it was, in Menenius's opinion, almost impossible to praise too highly. For **leasing** (A. S. *lēasing*, *leasung*, a falsehood), cp. *T. N.* i. 5. 105, "Now Mercury endue thee with *leasing*, for thou speakest well of fools." Henley adds *Psalms* iv. 2, "how long will ye love vanity, and seek after *leasing*."

23. **I must ... pass**, you must no longer refuse to let me pass.

29. **always ... general**, who in all matters took the side of, etc.

30. **Howsoever ... liar**, whatever lies you may have told on his behalf ; or **Howsoever** may be = although, as in *H. V.* iv. 1. 130, "I daresay you love him not so ill ... *howsoever* you speak this to feel other men's minds."

31. **telling ... him**, serving under him and speaking the truth. The sentinel means, 'I do not claim to be his friend and to have the privilege of telling lies in his honour ; as a mere subordinate, my duty is to repeat his orders as I received them.'

33. **out**, out from ; when used as a preposition = out of, from, more usually preceded by *from*, e.g. *M. V.* iii. 4. 21, "*From out* the state of hellish misery."

39. **in a ... ignorance**, in a paroxysm of popular stupidity.

40. **your shield**, him who was to you what the shield is to the body : **to front**, to confront ; cp. ii. *H. IV.* iv. 1. 25, "What well-appointed leader *fronts* us here ?", and *A. C.* i. 4. 79, "To *front* this present time" : **easy**, that come so readily to old women.

41. **the virginal ... daughters**, the hands of your young maidens held up in supplication.

42. **palsied**, tremulous ; *palsy*, in its older form *parlesy*, a contraction of the F. *paralytie* : **decayed dotant**, feeble old dotard.

43, 4. **the intended ... in**, the fire which is so soon to be set to your city.

46. **out of**, beyond the possibility of.

47. **captain**, Menenius uses the word in the general sense of commander, but the sentinel purposely misunderstands him by taking it in its literal sense of the captain of a company.

48. **estimation**, esteem, respect.

53. **your ... blood**, the few drops of blood left in your wizened old body.



53. 4. **the utmost ... having**, all you will get out of me ; for **having**, as a substantive, cp. *T. N.* iii. 4. 379, " My *having* is not much " ; *W. T.* iv. 4. 470.

57. **companion**, see note on iv. 5. 12 ; I'll say ... **you**, I'll deliver a message for you, *i.e.* will tell Coriolanus of your behaviour.

59. a **Jack guardant**, a Jack-in-office pluming yourself upon keeping such good guard ; the old man's retort for " decayed dotant," l. 42, **Jack** being used for a saucy boy, and with an allusion to the heraldic term ' guardant ' : **office me**, keep me by your officiousness from, etc.

60. **by my ... him**, by the way in which you will see him receive me.

61. **standest ... hanging**, are not in a fair way to being hanged.

62. **more ... spectatorship**, which will afford the lookers-on a prolonged enjoyment of your agony.

63. **presently**, immediately : **swoon**, faint.

64. 5. **sit ... prosperity**, constantly deliberate in what way your happiness above all men may be increased ; **synod**, convocation, assembly ; in poetry especially of the gods, and in modern prose chiefly of an ecclesiastical council ; Gk. *σύνωδος*, a coming together.

66. **father**, *sc.* in years.

67. **look thee**, see ; used to call attention, and more commonly with *you* : **water**, *sc.* his tears.

68. **hardly moved**, with difficulty induced.

69. **move thee**, touch your heart.

70. **conjure**, adjure.

71. **petitionary**, suppliant ; cp. *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 199, " I prithee with most *petitionary* vehemence."

72. **the dregs**, what is left of it being sufficient for the punishment of such a contemptible fellow : **varlet**, formerly a groom, then any low fellow ; an older spelling, says Skeat, was *vaslet*, a diminutive of O. F. *vassal*, so meaning a young vassal.

73. **block**, here used first as an impediment, secondly as a blockhead.

77. **are servanted**, are made the servants of.

77-9. **though ... breasts**, though the revenge I seek is peculiarly my own, any mercy I may show depends upon the will of the Volscians ; **properly**, Lat. *proprius*, one's own.

79-81. **That we ... much**, the remembrance of our having once been friends shall be allowed to perish of ingratitude and forget-



fulness rather than the closeness of such friendship be borne in mind by pity.

83. **for**, since.

87. **yet thou behold'st**, yet you see how inflexible I am towards him.

88. **You keep ... temper**, you act with firmness up to your promises.

89. **Now ... Menenius**, see l. 11, above.

90. **I. you know .. again**, *i.e.* the result of this interview, which you boasted would be so satisfactory, is that you are at liberty to retrace your steps homeward.

92. **3. Do you ... back?** these are the rebukes with which you threatened us for not giving admission to so high and mighty a personage as yourself! *shent*, cp. *T. N.* iv. 2. 112, "I am *shent* for speaking to you"; *shend*, "A.S. *scendan*, *scyndan*, O. Du. *schenden*, O. H. G. *scendan*, *scentan*, from *schande*, disgrace, revile" (Stratmann, *Dict. O.E. Language*, s.v. *schenden*).

94. **What ... swoon**, I have mighty reason to swoon, as you prophesied, have I not?

95-7. **for such ... slight**, as for such miserable creatures as you are, no one would be likely to trouble himself about you.

97. **by himself**, by his own act.

98. **9. be that ... age!** I cannot wish you any worse fate than that you should long continue what you are, and that your miserable state should become more miserable the longer you live.

100. **I say ... Away!** see l. 73, above; a memory, too, perhaps of Coriolanus's words, "I banish you," iii. 3. 123.

101. **The worthy ... general**, it is our general who deserves all the praise; for **the**, see Abb. § 92.

### SCENE III.

**2. Set down**, encamp.

**3, 4. how plainly ... business**, with what a straightforward loyalty to the Volscians I have behaved in these negotiations

**4, 5. Only ... respected**, you have considered nothing but their interests.

**7, 8. such ... That**, see Abb. § 279: **thought ... you**, made certain that they would prevail with you.

**9. Whom ... Rome**, whom I have sent back broken-hearted.

**11. godded**, idolized, worshipped as a god: **Their latest refuge**, their last hope of salvation.

**13. show'd sourly**, behaved so harshly.

15. cannot now accept, *i.e.* from very pride : to grace him, in order that he might find favour in their eyes by being the bearer of this offer.

17-9. fresh embassies ... to, to no further embassies whether from the state or, etc.

21. In the ... made, at the very moment of making it.

24. out, away ! I will have nothing to do with you.

25. All bond .. break ! let every natural tie and ordinance give way ; for All, = every, see Abb. § 12.

26. Let it be ... obstinate, in future let obstinacy be accounted a virtue, not a vice.

27. What is ... worth ? that curtsy avails nothing with me, has no power to soften my heart ; curt'sy, a contracted form of *courtesy*, used specially of the courteous inclination of the body by women : those doves' eyes, those eyes as mild as the eyes of doves.

28. Which can ... forsworn, though their charm would make even gods perjure themselves.

29. Of stronger earth, of more inflexible nature.

30. Olympus, the eastern part of the chain of mountains which formed the southern boundary of ancient Greece, and the fabled residence of the gods.

33. Great nature, the natural feelings so strong in one.

34. harrow, used here in a double sense, that of ravaging and that of breaking up the soil as a harrow, a frame of wood fitted with spikes, does after it has been ploughed. In the former sense it is from the A.S. *hergian*, to lay waste, to over-run with an army : in the latter, from M. E. *harwe*, a harrow, rake.

35. to obey instinct, as to yield to mere natural feelings.

38. These eyes ... Rome, I no longer look upon you as I did before my banishment ; circumstances have changed my views of everything.

39, 40. The sorrow ... so, Virgilia, taking or affecting to take his words literally, replies, it is only that we are so changed by sorrow, that you do not see us as you once did.

40, 1. Like ... part, Malone compares *Sonn.* xxiii. 1. 2, " As an *unperfect actor* on a stage, Who with his fear is put beside his part."

41, 2. and I ... disgrace, and am so completely at a loss for words that I shall utterly disgrace myself ; for out, cp. *A. Y. L.* iv. 1. 76, " Very good orators, when they are out, they will spit " : Best of my flesh, you who are part of my flesh and bone, and the better part ; cp. *Genesis*, ii. 23, " And Adam said, This is now

bone of my bone, and *flesh of my flesh* : she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

43. *tyranny*, cruelty ; cp. *M. V.* iv. 1. 13, "To suffer, with a quietness of spirit The very *tyranny* and rage of his," *i.e.* Shylock's cruel determination to have his pound of flesh.

44. For that, because I ask forgiveness of yourself : **O, a kiss**, grant me a kiss.

46. the jealous ... **heaven**, "*i.e.* by Juno, the guardian of marriage, and consequently the avenger of connubial perfidy" (Johnson).

46, 7. that kiss ... **dear**, such was the very kiss I last took from you.

47, 8. and my true ... **since**, and since then my loyal lips have known no kiss from other lip ; it, used indefinitely, as in "prince *it*," *Cymb.* iii. 3. 85, "queen *it*," *W. T.* iv. 4. 460 : **prate**, talk idly.

51, 2. Of thy ... **sons**, give stronger evidence of your deep sense of duty than ordinary sons would do ; with a play upon **deep** and **impression**.

54-6. and **unproperly** ... **parent**, and, contrary to all notions of what is proper, let me make dutiful obeisance to you, as though the submission of children to parents, which has been customary up to this time, was an inversion of the natural order of things.

57. Your **knees to me** ? do you kneel to me ? **corrected**, chidden by you.

58. **hungry**, sterile, unprolific ; as Steevens explains.

59. **Fillip**, strike ; cp. *T. C.* iv. 5. 45, "You *fillip* me o' the head." To *fillip* is "to strike with the finger nail, when jerked from under the thumb ... an easier form of *filp*, which arose from *flp*, by the shifting of *l*" (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*).

60. **Strike**, hurl.

61, 2. **Murdering** ... **work**, putting an end to impossibility, and so making what cannot be, the easiest thing in the world.

63. I **holp** to frame thee, I helped to make you the warrior that you are ; **holp**, used by Shakespeare for both the past tense and the past participle.

64. **Publicola**, Publius Valerius, surnamed Publicola from the services he rendered to the people, took an active part in the expulsion of the Tarquins, and was three times consul.

65. The **moon of Rome**, the Diana (goddess of chastity) among Roman women. It is to her that Plutarch ascribes the idea of the ladies' intercession with Coriolanus.

66. **curded**, made like a curd, *i.e.* coagulated milk.



68. This is ... yours, this is yourself in miniature ; of yours, a double genitive.

69, 70. Which ... yourself, "an epitome of you which, enlarged by the commentaries of time, may equal you in magnitude" (Johnson) ; *i.e.* when time has set the mark of years upon him.

70. god of soldiers, Mars.

71, 2. inform ... nobleness, shape your thoughts in all nobleness ; not elsewhere used by Shakespeare in this literal sense.

73. stick, stand out firmly.

74, 5. Like ... flaw, like some conspicuous mark at sea firm against every blast, and a refuge for all who can discern you in their distress ; "a *flaw* of wind is a gust, which is very violent upon a sudden, but quickly endeth. Smith's *Sea Grammar*, 1627, p. 46" (Dyce, *Gloss.*).

75. Your knee, sirrah, kneel down, sir ; sirrah, generally, but not always, used in a peremptory or contemptuous manner ; sometimes to women.

76. That's ... boy ! well done, my boy ! Cp. *W. T.* i. 2. 121, "Why, *that's my bawcock*," said approvingly by the king to his son.

80, 1. The things ... denials, you can never regard me as refusing to you the things which I have bound myself by an oath not to grant ; though by my oath I am pledged to refuse them, it is not a refusal to you.

82. capitulate, enter into negotiations ; literally to divide into chapters, arrange under headings ; now used only in the sense of surrendering. In i. *H. IV.* iii. 2. 120, in the sense of entering into an agreement, "Percy, Northumberland, ... *Capitulate* against us and are up."

84. Wherein ... unnatural, of what in my behaviour seems unnatural towards you and towards my country.

86. Your colder reasons, your more temperate arguments.

89-91. yet we will ... hardness, yet we will continue to make supplication, so that if we fail to obtain what we ask, the blame may rest upon you for your stubbornness, not on us for our want of persistency ; *we fail* is Rowe's correction of the reading of the folios *you fail*, which most modern editors retain, and which may perhaps be explained 'fail in the matter of our request.'

94, 5. our raiment ... life, the state of our raiment and the condition of our bodies would show plainly what kind of life, etc. Wright points out that *bewray* "although used almost interchangeably with 'betray,' differs from it in not necessarily involving the idea of treachery." The word originally meant to accuse. The greater part of this speech is taken almost word for word from Plutarch. See Introduction.



97. 8. **How more ... hither**, how much more unfortunate than all living women are we in having to come here on such an errand.

100. **Constrains ... sorrow**, compels our eyes to shed tears, our hearts to shake with, etc.

102. 3. **tearing ... out**, cp. *K. J.* v. 2. 151-3, "you ingrate revolts, You bloody Neroes, ripping up the womb Of your dear mother England": **to poor we**, see note on iii. 2. 83.

104. **capital**, fatal, destructive.

104. 5. **thou barr'st .. gods**, you prevent us from offering up our prayers to the gods; cp. *R. III.* iv. 4. 400, "Heaven and fortune *bar me* happy hours"; *M. V.* ii. 1. 16.

106. **can we**, here the emphasis on **we**, in the next line on **can**.

107-9. **Alas, ... bound**, alas, how *can* we possibly pray for our country, to do which we, as Romans, are in duty bound, and at the same time pray for your victory, to do which we, as your nearest relations, are equally bound? Cp. *K. J.* iii. 1. 327-36, where Blanche is in the same predicament, and *A. C.* iii. 4. 12-19.

109. 10. **or ... or**, either ... or.

111-3. **We must ... win**, calamity must plainly be ours, even if our wish were gratified as to which side should be victorious; cp. the two last lines of the passage in *K. J.* just referred to.

114. **a foreign recreant**, no longer a Roman, but a stranger by your own apostasy; **recreant**, originally the present participle of the *F.* verb *recroire*, to believe again, to alter one's faith.

115. **manacles**, strictly speaking, fetters for the hands, but used also in the wider sense of fetters generally; **thorough**, the lengthened form of *through* for the sake of the metre.

117. **bear the palm**, literally be graced with the symbol of victory, but of course ironical for, be notorious instead of famous; cp. *J. C.* i. 2. 131, "So get the start of the majestic world And *bear the palm* alone."

120. **determine**, come to an end; in this sense used chiefly in legal phraseology; cp. *A. C.* iii. 13. 161, "as it *determines*, so Dissolve my life!"

122. **the end**, the object of it (*sc.* Corioli), viz. the destruction of Rome.

126. 7. **to keep ... time**, to hand down your name to future times: *A'*, he; so sometimes *'am* for them.

129. 30. **Not of ... see**, to avoid yielding to womanly tenderness, one ought never to see the face of woman or child.

132-5. **If it were ... honour**, if our prayer to you to save the Romans involved your destroying the Volscians, whose servant

you now are, you might condemn us as asking something which would be a deathblow to your honour.

136-8. **while ... received**, so that while on the one hand the Volscians may say with just pride 'This mercy we have shown,' the Romans on the other hand may with grateful hearts say, etc. : **in, on**.

139. **Give ... thee**, greet you with acclamations of honour such as are addressed to kings ; cp. *Macb.* i. 5. 56, "Great Glamis ! worthy Cawdor ! Greater than both, by the *all-hail* hereafter !" *i.e.* when you shall have become not only thane of Glamis and Cawdor, but king also.

143, 4. **such a name ... curses**, a name which at every mention will be followed by curses ; for **such ... Whose**, see Abb. § 278.

145. **Whose chronicle thus writ**, the annals of whose life will be written in these words.

146. **he wiped it out**, blotted out his title to be called noble.

147. **and, i.e.** and consequently.

148. **To the ensuing age**, to all future time ; not merely the next following age, but to each age as it follows a former one.

149. **Thou hast ... honour**, it has ever been your aim to show yourself animated by the most chivalrous impulses ; cp. *Cymb.* iii. 4. 95, "It is no act of common passage, but a *strain* of rareness."

151-3. **To tear ... oak**, like them to thunder in tones which should strike terror into every heart, and yet, like them, in mercy to let the lightning of your wrath fall with but sparing destruction ; for **cheeks o' the air**, cp. *R. II.* iii. 3. 57, "With no less terror than the elements Of fire and water when their thundering shock At meeting tears the cloudy *cheeks of heaven*." **In charge** the figure is that of loading a cannon, the **sulphur** which accompanied Jove's thunderbolts answering to the gunpowder which propels the cannon-ball ; cp. *M. M.* ii. 2. 115, "Merciful Heaven ! Thou rather with thy sharp and *sulphurous bolt* Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak Than the soft myrtle" ; and for the sulphurous breath of Jove, *Cymb.* v. 4. 115.

155. **Still ... wrongs**, to cherish in his heart a remembrance of injuries received.

156. **He cares ... weeping**, your tears have no effect upon him.

159. **More ... mother**, who owes a deeper debt of gratitude to his, etc.

160. **Like ... stocks**, like one who, sitting in the stocks, in vain implores pity from the passers-by ; **the stocks**, a contrivance for punishing vagrants and petty offenders, consisting of two blocks of wood, one above the other, working on a hinge, with the lower edge of the upper block and the upper edge of the lower block

cut away so as to admit the legs of the offender, which were then confined by the end opposite to the hinge being fastened by a padlock. These stocks were to be seen in every village not very many years ago.

162-4. **When she . . . honour**, at those times when she with proud affection sent you forth to the wars, and as proudly welcomed you on your return home, covered with honour; **fond . . . brood**, her love being given to you alone without any desire for other children; to *cluck* is to call as a hen does when her young are straying from her; **Loaden**, to *load* and to *lade* are doublets, and we now use 'loaded' and 'laden,' not 'loaden.'

164, 5. **Say . . . back**, if you can say with truth that my request is one I have no right to make, then you may well send me back to Rome unsatisfied; for the construction, cp. *W. T.* i. 2. 35, "But let him say so then, and let him go, But let him swear so, and he shall not stay"; **not so**, not unjust.

167. **That thou . . . belongs**, that you do not show me that dutiful submission which a son ought to show to his mother.

170, 1. **To his surname . . . prayers**, his pride in his title of Coriolanus, which he won for capturing Corioli, and now complacently wears as the servant of that city, is greater than his pity for our misery. Unless Volumnia means to taunt him with being proud of serving Corioli, there seems no point in her words.

171. **an end**, here we will make an end of our supplications.

173. **And die . . . neighbours**, and die with those who are our friends, not stay with one who is now a stranger to us.

174. **cannot tell**, does not know.

175. **for fellowship**, merely because he sees us do so.

176. **Does reason . . . strength**, thereby furnishes a stronger argument in support of our prayer.

178. **to, for**; cp. *R. II.* iv. 1. 308, "I have a king here to my flatterer"; and see Abb. § 189.

179, 80. **and his . . . chance**, and this child which bears his name, owes to accident, not to real paternity, the likeness he bears to him: **despatch**, permission to return.

181. **I am hush'd**, I will speak no more words of reproach: **a-fire**, on fire.

186. **to Rome**, for Rome, as far as Rome is concerned.

188, 9. **Most . . . to him**, the victory you have gained over him, is one that will be most dangerous, if not fatal, to him; **mortal**, the adverbial termination is to be supplied from **dangerously** in the previous line; for other instances of this ellipsis, see Abb. § 397.



189. **let it come**, let this fatal stroke fall upon me.

190. **true wars**, war in which the objects of the Volscians shall be faithfully kept in view.

191. **convenient**, suitable ; in which their interests will be adequately maintained.

192. **would you ... less ?** would you have listened to a mother's pleadings with greater sternness ?

194. **withal**, *sc.* by her entreaties.

196. **to sweat compassion**, to shed tears of pity which are forced from my heart with no less effort than sweat is forced from the body by strenuous labour.

197. **What peace ... me**, tell me what terms of peace you desire to exact.

199. **Stand to me**, support me against all complaints that may be made by your fellow-countrymen.

200-2. **I am glad .. fortune**, I rejoice to see that you have brought your honour and your mercy into conflict over this business ; for I will use this circumstance as a means of restoring myself to the high position I formerly held (but from which your pre-eminence has brought me down).

202. **Ay, by and by**, yes, very shortly ; in answer to some request made by the ladies.

203. **But ... together**, but, before you go, we will drink together in token of our amity ; cp. ii. *H. IV.* iv. 2. 63, "and here between the armies Let's *drink together* friendly and embrace, That all their eyes may bear those tokens home Of our restored love and amity." Steevens, who refers to this passage, thinks that here female delicacy has not been sufficiently consulted.

204. **A better witness**, stronger evidence, *sc.* in a formal agreement drawn up on paper.

205. **On like conditions**, on terms "such as you may hope to obtain" (Schmidt) ; possibly the reference is to some terms they had discussed apart, in which case **like** will mean *similar*. Plutarch says, "These words (*sc.* those rendered by Shakespeare as "O my mother ... mortal to him") being spoken openly, he spake a little apart with his mother and wife, and then let them return again to Rome, for so they did request him" (Skeat, *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, p. 38).

207. **built you**, built for you, in your honour ; which Plutarch says was done.



## SCENE IV.

1. **coign**, corner, from F. *coing*, a corner, Lat. *cuneus*, a wedge, was formerly spelt indifferently *coign* and *coing*. Cp. *Macb.* i. 6. 7, "no jutting, frieze, Buttress, nor *coign* of vantage."

2. **Why, what of that?** well, supposing we do, what has that to do with the matter?

6. **stay upon execution**, await the sentence being carried out; **upon**, cp. *A. W.* iii. 5. 48, "I thank you and will stay *upon* your leisure," i.e. expectant of your being at leisure to do what you have promised.

8. **condition**, nature.

10. **your**, see note on i. 1. 104: **was**, once.

11, 2. **a creeping thing**, i.e. like a grub, a butterfly in its earliest stage.

15. **Than an ... horse**, *sc.* remembers his dam; animals apparently very soon forgetting all relationship to one another: **tartness**, acidity, sour looks; A.S. *teart*, sharp, severe.

16. **an engine**, some mighty war machine; probably here an allusion to battering-rams; cp. *T. C.* i. 3. 208, "So that the ram that batters down the wall... They place before his hand that made the *engine*."

18, 9. **his ... battery**, when he clears his throat, it is as the discharge of a whole park of artillery.

19. **state**, chair of state; cp. i. *H. IV.* ii. 4. 416, "this chair shall be my *state*, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown."

19, 20. **as a thing ... Alexander**, as though he were representing Alexander; **made for**, made in imitation of.

20, 1. **is finished ... bidding**, i.e. instantaneously: **wants**, lacks, requires.

22. **to throne in**, in which to be enthroned.

23. **Yes, mercy**, yes, he lacks mercy.

24. **in the character**, in his true character; for **the**, denoting notoriety, see Abb. § 92.

27. **long of you**, along of you, owing to you; literally, side by side with you, the notion of proximity passing into that of causality.

30. **respected not**, showed no reverence for, did not heed what they thought.

30, 1. **he returning**, now that he is coming back.

33. **plebeians**, accented on the first syllable as in i. 9. 7.

34. **hale ... down**, are dragging him first in one direction, then

in another ; *hale*, the older form of *haul*, from A.S. *holian*, to acquire, get.

35. *comfort*, in the shape of good news.

36. *They ... inches*, they will put him to death by slow torture.

38. *are dislodged*, have broken up their encampment.

40. *not the ... Tarquins*, not even that on which the Tarquins were expelled ; see note on ii. l. 138.

43. *Where ... it ?* where have you been hiding yourself that you doubt the truth of the news ?

44. *blown tide*, tide swollen by the wind ; the *arch* making it more boisterous by its restraint. Malone compares *Lucr.* 1667, 8, "As *through an arch* the violent roaring *tide* Outruns the eye that doth behold his haste."

45. *the recomforted*, those who by hearing the news have had fresh comfort given them.

46. *sack-buts*, "a kind of wind-instrument ... The *sack-but* resembled the modern trombone ... the word is used to translate the Heb. *sabbeká*, Gk. *σαμβύκη*, Lat. *sambuca*, which was a stringed instrument" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*) : "*psalteries*, a kind of stringed instrument ... — O. F. *psalterie*, = Lat. *psalterium*. — Gk. *ψαλτήρ*, a harper" ... (*id.*) ; a recollection no doubt of *Daniel*, iii. 7, "That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, *sack-but*, *psaltery*, dulcimer and all kinds of music," etc.

47. *Tabors*, see note on i. 6. 25 : *cymbals*, brazen discs, held one in each hand and clashed together.

48. *Make the sun dance*, make the very sun rejoice with us ; Wright refers to an old popular superstition that the sun is seen to dance on Easter Sunday, *i.e.* the anniversary of Christ's rising from the grave.

53, 4. *This morning ... doit*, only a few hours ago I would not have given a halfpenny for the lives of ten thousand of you : joy, rejoice.

55. *tidings*, news, like which word it is used by Shakespeare both as a singular and a plural noun.

58. *at point to*, on the point of.

59. *help the joy*, help with my voice to swell the rejoicings.

#### SCENE V.

1. *the life of Rome*, to whom Rome owes its life.

4. *Unshout ... Marcius*, cancel the shouts with which you banished Marcius by still louder ones in his honour.

5. *Repeal ... mother*, by the welcome you give to his mother proclaim his recall ; for *Repeal*, cp. iv. l. 41.

## SCENE VI.

2, 3. **having ... them**, bid them when they have read it: **repair**, see note on ii. 3. 141.

4. **Even in theirs**, in their very ears; face to face with them.

5. **vouch ... it**, give full proof of the truth of its contents: **Him I accuse**, he whom I accuse; for **Him** put for *he* by attraction to *whom* understood, cp. *Hamlet*. ii. 1. 42, "Your party in converse, *him* you would sound... He closes with you in the consequence"; *A. C.* iii. 1. 16.

6. **by this**, *sc.* time.

8. **To purge himself**, to clear himself of all charges to be brought against him.

9. **How is it ... general?** how does our general fare? the third person being used deferentially.

13-5. **If you do ... parties**, if you still adhere to that purpose in which you desired our co-operation: **I cannot tell**, I do not know.

16. **We must ... people**, our action must be guided by the temper in which we find the citizens.

18. **'Twixt ... difference**, there is a dispute between you and Coriolanus.

19. **Makes ... all**, gives everything into the hands of the one who survives.

20, 1. **And my ... construction**, and I can easily put a plausible construction upon my pretext for ruining him: **pawn'd**, pledged.

22. **truth**, sincerity of purpose, honesty: **who ... heighten'd**, and he being raised to this position; the relative is here redundant; see Abb. § 249.

25. **bow'd his nature**, humbled himself; cp. *A. W.* i. 2. 41-3, "who were below him He used as creatures of another place And *bow'd* his eminent top their low ranks."

26. **free**, submitting to no control.

27. **stoutness**, stubbornness; cp. "stout," iii. 2. 78.

29. **By lack of stooping**, — "we may fill up the sentence by supplying 'is a proof of this'" (Wright): **That ... of**, I intended to mention that.

32. **gave him way**, allowed him perfect freedom of action; cp. *A. C.* i. 3. 9, "In each thing *give him way*, cross him in nothing."

34. **his ... accomplish**, towards the accomplishment of his projects.

35, 6. served . . person, helped by my own personal service to carry out his designs.

37. which he . . his, which he garnered up for himself. Wright has shown that to **end** was the technical term for getting in and housing a crop, and that it is probably a corruption of to *inn* used in that sense; among other passages, he quotes Bacon, *History of Henry VII.*, "All was *inned* at last into the King's Barne." Arrowsmith, quoted by Dyce, points out that to **end** a rick of hay is still used of stacking it.

37, 8. and took . . wrong, and felt some honest pride in thus injuring myself to do him grace.

40, 1. He waged . . mercenary, he treated me as one whose services could be bought and were well paid for by patronizing looks; for **countenance**, cp. *J. C.* i. 3. 159, "And that which would appear offence in us, His *countenance*, . . Will change to virtue and to worthiness."

42. in the last, at last.

43. had carried, had virtually captured: and that, and when that.

44, 5. There was . . him, that is the very matter for which I will use my utmost efforts to destroy him; for **stretch'd**, strained to the utmost, cp. *J. C.* iv. 1. 44, "Our best friends made, our means *stretch'd*"; *Per.* v. 1. 55.

46. At a few . . rheum, for the value of a few tears; cp. *K. J.* iii. 1. 22, "Why holds thine eye that lamentable *rheum*."

47, 8. he sold . . action, he bartered away all the lives we had lost and all the labours we had undergone in our great enterprise.

49. And I'll . . fall, and in his downfall will regain my former standing; perhaps with an allusion to the phoenix rising out of its own ashes.

50. like a post, with no more ceremony than attends a messenger bringing news.

52. patient, long suffering.

53, 4. their base . . glory, are base enough to split their throats with shouting in his honour: at your **vantage**, when a chance offers.

55. move, impress favourably.

57. second, assist: along, stretched out a corpse.

58, 9. After your . . body, the story of his behaviour, told as you may choose to tell it, will be the grave of the reasons he may plead, as the earth will be the grave of his body.

62. with heed, carefully.

63. to hear't, to hear what you have set down.



64. What faults he made, we now say to *commit* a fault, to *make* a mistake.

65. Might ... *finis*, might have escaped with but slight punishment.

65-9. but there ... *excuse*, but nothing can palliate the fact of his having brought our enterprise to an end at the very point where it should have begun in earnest (*i.e.* by the capture of Rome), and of his having thrown away the whole advantage gained by the raising of our army, giving us for our only recompense the burden of the outlay, and making peace at the very moment when our enemies were ready to offer their submission.

71. your soldier, still at your command.

72. infected, as though love for his country so long as he was in their service was a disease.

73, 4. but still ... *command*, still continuing obedient to your, etc. You are to know, I have to tell you.

75-7. That prosperously ... Rome, that with success I have conducted the war, and with great slaughter of your enemies have forced my way even to, etc.

78. a full ... *part*, *i.e.* by a full part ; the expenses being paid, with a surplus of as much as a third of the amount.

83, 4. what ... *on*, the terms of our treaty ; see iii. 1. 3, and cp. *K. J.* ii. 1. 231, "Till you *compound* whose right is worthiest."

85. But tell ... *degree*, most editors put a comma after *traitor* ; the folios have none, and the words in the high'st degree seem to belong more naturally to *traitor* than to *abused*.

88-90. dost thou think ... *Corioli* ? do you suppose that here in *Corioli* I will give you that title to which you have no right ?

93. certain drops of salt, a few bitter tears.

94. I say 'your city,' *sc.* since, but for his perfidy, it would be yours.

96. twist, a few threads twisted together.

96, 7. never ... *war*, never allowing the advice of any one as to how the war should be managed : at his nurse's tears, the moment his mother began to weep ; *nurse's*, used contemptuously.

99. pages, mere boy attendants : men of heart, brave men.

100. at other, at the other, at one another.

101. thou ... tears, you who whimper like a boy ; you whimpering boy.

103, 4. thou hast ... it, your words have made my heart swell till it threatens to burst my breast ; cp. *A. C.* i. 1. 6-8, "his captain's heart Which in the scuffles of great fights hath burst The buckles on his breast."

106. to scold, to have recourse to womanish weapons.

106, 7. **Your judgements ... lie**, I must trust to your decision to brand this coward as a liar: **notion**, understanding; cp. *Macb.* iii. 1. 83.

108, 9. **Who wears ... grave**, who still bears on his body the marks of my blows, and must carry to his grave the disgrace of being cudgelled by me.

110. **To thrust ... him**, to force the lie down his throat: **unto**, into.

113. **Stain ... me**, thrust all your swords into my body.

114. **'tis there**, it is written there.

116. **Flutter'd**, caused the hearts of your Volscians to flutter with fear like timid doves: **your**, contemptuously.

118, 9. **Will you ... braggart**, will you suffer yourselves to be reminded by this accursed boaster of his undeserved good fortune and your disgrace? **blind**, the usual epithet of the goddess Fortune, and here transferred to her gifts.

121. **presently**, at once.

125, 6. **his fame ... earth**, his fame overspreads the whole earth; cp. iii. 3. 68.

127. **judicious**, here apparently = judicial.

128. **the peace**, *sc.* which would otherwise prevail.

129. **his tribe**, the whole of his race; cp. iv. 2. 24.

130. **To use ... sword!** with the right to use my sword.

133. **valour**, all brave men.

135. **Put up**, sheathe; cp. *Oth.* i. 2. 59, "*Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.*"

136. **as**, which.

138. **Which this ... you**, which while this man lived was owing to you, would sooner or later have fallen upon you.

139. **Please it**, if it please: **your honours**, a title.

140. **To call ... senate**, to summon me before your senate.

140-2. **I'll deliver ... censure**, I will prove my loyalty to you, or submit to any sentence, however heavy, you may be pleased to pass upon me.

144, 5. **that ever ... urn**, "this allusion is to a custom unknown, I believe, to the ancients, but observed in the public funerals of English princes, at the conclusion of which a herald proclaims the style [*i.e.* titles] of the deceased" (Steevens); **urn**, grave; cp. *H. V.* i. 2. 228, "Or lay these bones in an unworthy *urn*."

145, 6. **His own ... blame**, Coriolanus's own violence in a great measure excuses Aufidius's deed.

149. I'll be one, *sc.* of the four bearers.

151. **Trail ... pikes**, in following the corpse of a soldier to the grave the pikes were trailed, drawn, along the ground, just as now-a-days the rifle of the private and the sword of the officer are carried reversed.

152. **unchilded**, made childless.

154. **memory**, memorial; *cp.* above, *iv.* 5. 68.

**STAGE DIRECTION.** A **dead march**, the music played at the funeral of a soldier.

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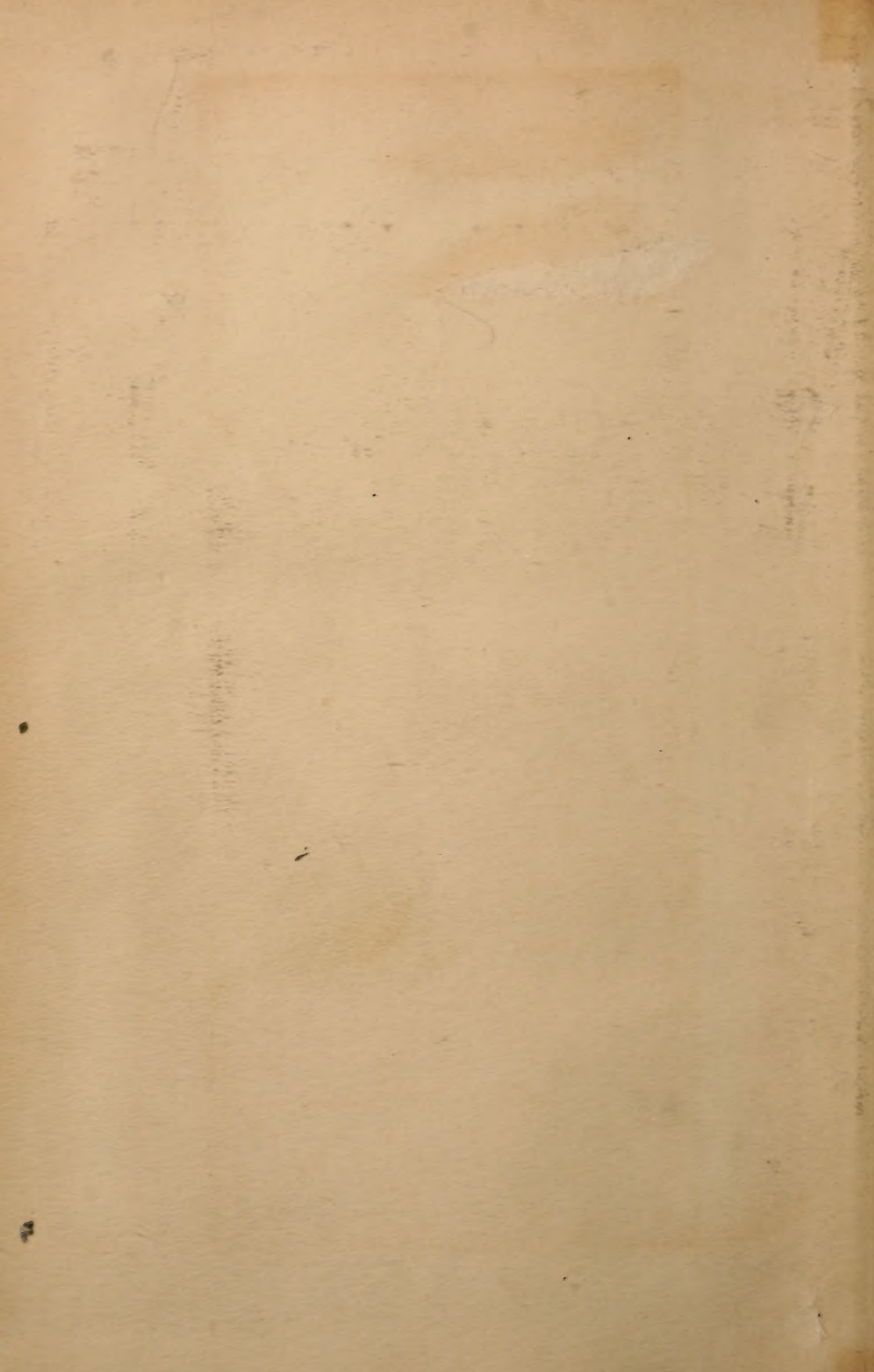
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